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CONTENTS

	Page
COMMENTS	605
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE	607
RATIONING, PRICE-FIXING AND MR. KEYNES. By A. Susan Lawrence	608
A LONDON DIARY	609
THIS ENGLAND	610
THAT GERMANY	610
NEPOTISM AND THE CIVIL SERVICE	610
STAND OF THE OLD BRIGADE. By Sagittarius	612
STARSHINE. By Y. Y.	612
NOTES ON SHOWS. By Raymond Mortimer	613
GEORGE LANSBURY	614
POEM. By Frederic Prokosch	614
CREATURE COMFORTS. By Michael Zoshchenko	615
PLAYS AND PICTURES	615
CORRESPONDENCE	616
From J. W. Hobson; Prof. J. R. Marrack; R. B. Braithwaite; Dr. Hewlett Johnson; Harold T. Wilkins; J. B.; Anthony Bertram; George Richards; F. H. C. Shrewsbury; L. S. Schulz; Charles Speller; M. Marshall; D. Hume-Rothery; Phyllis Vallance; Rev. Canon B. H. Davies; Sybil Bolton; A. Morgan Young.	
REVIEWS:	
A Welcome Corrective. By R. H. S. Crossman	620
Bards. By Stephen Spender	620
George III and Bute. By L. B. Namier	622
New Novels. By John Mair	624
A Book Worth Reading. By E. E. Kellett	626
America in the Thirties. By Noel Annan	626
Pioneer, Not Hero. By Raymond Alderson	627
The Gaiety of Mr. Eliot. By G. W. Stonier	627
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	628
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Cynicus	630
CROSSWORD	630

LABOUR AND THE NATION

LABOUR'S decision to force the debate to a division has been completely justified. Without that division Mr. Chamberlain could have again "welcomed" criticism and retained control: now, despite Captain Margesson's efforts, he must admit that he and his most intimate friends have forfeited the confidence of the most tolerant House of Commons in history. If he can be persuaded to draw the proper conclusion, the way lies open to a Government competent to restore to the word national something of its real meaning. The discrediting of the Old Men of Munich offers the first chance of a representative government. And for this the country must thank the courage of the Labour Opposition.

But there is still much to be done if this object is to be achieved. Strenuous efforts will be made this week-end to patch up differences and to persuade the Opposition to come in under Mr. Chamberlain's umbrella or that of a successor to his taste. Such efforts must be frustrated. Real unity can only be based on an absolute disavowal of the spirit and the men of Munich: real leadership can only come from the men of all parties who risked unpopularity to denounce Chamberlainism in its days of success. That is why the Labour Party Conference which begins this week-end at Bournemouth has overnight become an event of national significance. Men of goodwill in the party, outside the party, and in every country of the world are asking one question. For eight months Labour has enjoyed power without responsibility: will it now display the will to responsible power? Delegates and leaders share that responsibility. Will they play their part, not as party politicians but as democrats, in the hour of trial?

The first task of the Party, now that it has ended its toleration of the Government, is to make clear to the country the reasons for that action. The web of optimism and complacency woven by the National Government will need some breaking: the people must be told what the situation is and what must be done in order to put it right. This is the first purpose for which the Bournemouth Conference should be used. To do this demands a courage which Labour's parliamentary leaders have not always shown. It is easy to denounce the inefficiency of our war finances, the iniquities of profiteering, the bottlenecks in supply, and to demand, in vague phrases, equality of sacrifice. That is all part of the game of party-politics as played by an Opposition; and many of the delegates, schooled by years of opposition without responsibility, will be only too ready to clap the phrase-makers and neglect the real problems. But if we are not to lose the war, we need a leadership which will frankly tell the country the job it has got to do and the sacrifices it has got to make. Unless the Bournemouth Conference hears some extremely unpalatable home-truths and accepts the responsibility for backing a policy based on those home-truths, its challenge to the Old Men of Munich will be of no benefit to the country.

The second task will be to clarify the Party's attitude to the conduct of the war. Here fortunately the statement on War and Peace Aims and the recent pamphlet on the Home Front provide the basis for discussion. The principles embodied in the first of these documents should be made conditions of any coalition: they are essential both for winning the war and for winning the peace. As for the problems of war-economy, the Conference must be prepared to scrap propaganda phrases in favour of honest thinking. Labour has rejected the Keynes plan: what alternative does it offer? It opposes dilution: how will it maximise arms production? Equally important are the issues of India, Japan and Russia. Each of these presents an "awkward" problem which politicians instinctively avoid. On each of them, a clear lead at Bournemouth would strengthen Labour's hands in negotiations with other parties. What is wanted is not a Government with four or five Labour members but a Government whose policy squares with democratic principles.

If the Conference could clarify policy on these major issues, it

would have but one further task to perform—to show its confidence in its leaders. To play with the tasks of Cabinet-making and tie down its Parliamentary representatives by irksome "conditions" is not democracy, but Party Tyranny. The party has the right and the duty to lay down the principles of policy during and after the war and to decide the issue of participation or non-participation in government. It must use that right and that duty to the full; but it should leave the detailed execution to its Parliamentary representatives. They and they alone can decide such questions. We believe the delegates should say to them "At last the country is sick of the Old Men of Munich and demands new leaders. At this Conference we have agreed to the main lines of Labour's war-policy. Provided that you take these as your guide in action we believe that you must accept the responsibilities of office: but you should enter no coalition which will compromise our principles. For unless these principles are put into practice, victory is impossible. It is for you to decide if and when you should act. We trust you to make your decision this day: we will accept it whether it means a continuance of opposition or an acceptance of office."

If the delegates at Bournemouth can reach this conclusion, they will have done their duty to Labour and to the Nation.

The Next Move

While we conducted our inquest on the defeat in Norway, the German military machine made ready from its central position to strike again, and in a new direction. Our disastrous leaders have timed all their preparations to fit their comfortable theory that this will be a three years' war. That is not the enemy's intention: he means to win this year. Then will it be in the East or in the West that he will deliver his next blow? With his immense advantage in air-power and in available man-power, he may well strike in both directions at once. He blocks the Baltic and holds every port along the Eastern and Southern shores of the North Sea, from Trondheim, through Danish Esbjerg to German Emden: to complete the semi-circle he needs Narvik at one extremity, with Amsterdam and Flushing at the other. The Dutch have been this week on the alert as never before, stopping leave, interning Quislings and turning over rivers, railways and telephones to military use. Washington understands the risk and has ordered the Pacific Battle Fleet to remain at Honolulu instead of returning to California—a gesture directed, doubtless, at Japan, lest she should attempt to "protect" the Dutch East Indies. What, if anything, we have in readiness to help the Dutch is not disclosed: rather more, let us hope, than a territorial division. For whether it be the West or the East that first hears the tramp of German legions, it is certain that new ordeals will presently test our will to resist and survive.

Mussolini's Choice

If rumour threatens Holland, other indications point towards the Balkans. Germany, it is reported, has addressed to Hungary a formal request for the passage of troops through her territory. Is this a threat to Rumania or Jugoslavia or to both? By its customary technique, Berlin has been suggesting that the Allies propose in the latter half of May to perpetrate several aggressions in the Balkans. Hitler's plan may provide for concerted "preventive" moves by German, Russian and Italian forces, to occupy their allotted spheres. But a good deal of persuasion has had to be used to oblige the Duce to enter the war without further delay. What Hitler may have said to him is that he must intervene now or forfeit his share of the booty. But our fleet is now concentrated in the Eastern Mediterranean. Pressure has been applied by Mr. Roosevelt to warn him that he would in effect reinforce a British blockade by the closing of the Mediterranean to American shipping as a prohibited "war-zone." Comings and goings between the Pope and Prince Umberto suggest that the Vatican and the Monarchy are both pressing for Italy's continued neutrality, and the faithful in St. Peter's have made a startling demonstration for peace. The Duce is silent, but the Fascist political machine continues to prepare the country for war, and "precautionary measures" against Yugoslavia are admitted. The logic of his commitments and ambitions is hurrying Mussolini into an adventure in which he stakes both his Dictatorship and his newly won Empire. There ought to be no doubt that an Italian attack on Jugoslavia will mean "total" war with the Allies.

Stalin's Policy

Russia's action on the Eastern scene is a factor as crucial as Italy's. Stalin has suddenly dismissed from the Commissariat for War Marshal Voroshilov, his oldest associate, with whom he had acted in the closest intimacy since they were comrades in arms during the Civil War. This, like the dismissal of Litvinov, may herald a new departure in policy. The choice as his successor of General Timoshenko, who led the occupation of Poland last autumn, may possibly point to a similar move against Rumania. If Germany walked in through Hungary, Russia would naturally occupy Bessarabia. In that event the frontiers between the two might not be easily fixed, for we gather that Russia's plan, if and when she marches, is to advance to the river Pruth and to take the whole delta of the Danube, including the vital port of Constanza and the northern Dobrudja. The sudden trade negotiations which Russia has conducted with two States on the extreme edges of her sphere of influence, Sweden and Yugoslavia, suggest anything rather than an easy relationship between Moscow and Berlin. Both these States were hostile to the Soviet Union: both turn to it as a possible counterweight against the graver threat from Germany and the Axis. The Turks, meanwhile, are watching every Italian movement closely and massing troops on the Bulgarian frontier. But we must not assume that their pledge to the Allies would operate if a Russian as well as a German army should invade Rumania.

Britain and the U.S.S.R.

In this situation, with Russia poised for a spring, yet manifestly suspicious of her German partner, the trade negotiations with Downing Street might exert a decisive influence on her movements. The delay of three weeks in responding to her overture, the narrowing of the discussion to trade alone, and the demand for particulars of all her exports to Germany have cooled any wish on her side for a *rapprochement*. Now it is she who delays her response to the chilling British answer. But there is a graver aspect to this business. While Downing Street asks for an undertaking, which it can get for the asking, that nothing imported from the British Empire shall reach Germany, it still pursues the alternative plan of a blockade of Vladivostok. For this, however, it requires Japan's consent. Hence the machinations in Tokio for a close Anglo-Japanese understanding, which would involve both a common front against Russia and a betrayal of China. Of these moves the notorious speech of our ambassador, Sir Robert Craigie, is the chief public indication. The effect of that speech on the American State Department was electrical. At a moment when the directors of policy in Moscow and Tokio are asking the question about our ability to survive this war that arises from our defeat in Norway, it is insanity to cold-shoulder the Russians and disgust the Americans. What may one day confront us is an agreement of Russia with the Have-Nots to carve up our Empire. A land-block stretching from Antwerp to Vladivostok would be irresistible. We can, if we are quick, win Russia's benevolent neutrality and buy up her next year's exportable surplus of oil.

Man-Power and Employment

The sharp drop in registered unemployment to well under a million, following upon a considerable drop the month before, is doubtless partly seasonal—witness the large part played by building. But it is also to some extent a sign that the need to fill the gaps caused by military recruitment is at last beginning to draw surplus man-power out of industries contracted as a result of the war. In the absence of figures of employment, as distinct from unemployment, in the various trades, it is impossible to get any clear picture of what is happening—in particular, of the extent to which man-power is being moved from one industry to another. But it seems, on the face of the figures, unlikely that expanded munition-making has been responsible for much of the absorption of labour. The two areas showing the largest drops in unemployment are London and the North-West, and the industries similarly affected are, according to the figures, building, distribution, agriculture and hotels. The total reduction of nearly 150,000 in a month looks impressive, despite the seasonal factor; but the continued unemployment of 972,695 persons after eight months of warfare is really the more significant fact. It represents a waste of man-power which we can ill afford and which must be stopped.

"In the Name of God, Go!"

Our Parliamentary Correspondent writes: Sir Roger Keyes in admiral's uniform with two rows of medals, stumbling over an unanswerable manuscript; Mr. Amery appealing in Cromwellian language to the Prime Minister to go before he had completed the ruin of this country; Mr. Herbert Morrison showing that Labour had at length decided to throw aside timidity and accept responsibility; Mr. Lloyd George, after one of the most effective speeches in his career, telling Mr. Chamberlain that the only service that he could still do his country is to surrender the seals of his office—these were the most dramatic moments of a great debate.

Tuesday's debate began with a speech from the Prime Minister which failed to come up to the expectations either of his friends or of his foes. When Mr. Attlee rose to reply no one expected the debate to end with a division. The cheer that followed his remark that "to win the war we want different people at the helm from those who have led us into it" was a sign that this was not to be merely an undertaker's debate. Sir Archibald Sinclair was also good. He was the only speaker who dealt adequately with the extremely important economic repercussions of the Norwegian fiasco. Then Sir Henry Page Croft and Colonel Wedgwood lowered the temper of the debate, while everyone waited for the serious speakers. Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, in full uniform to speak for British sailors, rose to deliver his attack upon the Admiralty. The House quickly refilled. In accordance with the traditions of the Silent Service, Sir Roger is a bad speaker. This heightened, upon this occasion, the dramatic effect of his speech. From the first word to the last, he gripped the attention of his audience with a savage onslaught upon the administration of his old friend and leader, Mr. Churchill. Just before Sir Roger sat down, Mr. Churchill turned round with a smile and an impulsive gesture of friendship. It is this magnanimity that endears him to the House, upon which—despite a widespread suspicion that he fumbled at a critical moment—his personal hold remains undiminished.

Mr. Amery, as chief speaker for the Conservative Opposition, was kept waiting until the dinner hour, when the House empties. He had, however, quite a good house; and he made what was, by common consent, the speech of his life. I have seldom heard anything more effective than the quotations from Cromwell in his peroration. The passion with which he addressed the Treasury Bench as "old decayed serving men and tapsters, and such kind of fellows" and finally bade them, in the name of God, to go, left the House a little breathless.

The straits to which the Government are now reduced was further revealed by the fact that, for their defence from the back benches, Captain Margesson was obliged to rely upon Mr. Lewis Jones and Sir Archibald Southby. They did not make a good impression upon anyone. From the Opposition benches Mr. Bellenger spoke well; and both Lord Winterton and Mr. Greenwood were in characteristic form. But Mr. Oliver Stanley was too obviously tired to do himself justice.

Directly it was known that the Labour Party had decided to press Wednesday's debate to a division, the chance that Mr. Chamberlain might be forced to resign became apparent. The onslaughts of Mr. Morrison and Mr. Duff Cooper were both highly effective, Mr. Lloyd George brought to his speech all the skill acquired in a lifetime of parliamentary leadership. He blighted Mr. Churchill's speech beforehand by warning him not to act "as an air-raid shelter to keep the splinters from hitting his colleagues." He made the most effective use of the Prime Minister's worst mistake. Surely no Prime Minister at a moment of national danger has ever before tried to save his position by appealing to his "friends" in the House. "This is a far bigger issue," said Mr. Lloyd George, "The Prime Minister must remember that he has met this formidable foe of ours in peace and in war and he has always been worsted." After this, Mr. Churchill had a hard time. He fought strongly and generously for Mr. Chamberlain; though his defence was a tacit accusation of past sins of omission.

The division, when it came, was clearly a shock to leading members of the Government. Every Privy Councillor in the House who is not also a member of the Government voted against the administration and the opposition vote included a large proportion of the many members who were in uniform. Mr. Chamberlain is not yet finally defeated, but he can scarcely last many days. The motion put down by Mr. Boothby and others to recall Parliament on Tuesday is a proof that there are many members who are determined to give this country even at this late hour some chance of pulling itself together. There has been no question of Party advantage in this debate. No one but an impossibly vain man can be anxious in this dangerous situation to assume responsibility, and it is the strangest fact of all that Mr. Chamberlain after so long and disastrous a period of responsibility should still apparently desire to cling to office.

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BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

AT length, terribly and dangerously late, the House of Commons has revolted. Members could not stand Mr. Chamberlain's appeal to his friends as if his personal position and not the safety of this country was at stake. They were exasperated, as we are all exasperated, by his remark that: "I do not think that the people of this country realise the extent or the imminence of the threat that is impending against us." How many responsible people have been warning Mr. Chamberlain of this threat ever since he came into office! How many told him that it was futile to accept Hitler's word at Munich, that it was dangerous as well as wicked to let Fascism win in Spain, to make gentlemen's agreements with Mussolini, to throw away the chance of the Russian alliance, to destroy the remnant of the Collective System and leave us alone with no friend except France, to face the full power of the Nazi Government and its satellites? If the public have not until recently realised the imminence of the danger whose fault is it but Mr. Chamberlain's? He has enjoyed scoring off the true friends of this country by telling the public that "they were fouling their own nest" that he was confident of victory, that Hitler had made terrific blunders and that Britain, in command of the seas and allied with France, would inevitably win even if it took three years. It is not the public, but the Government that has been reluctant to organise the country, to end an outworn economic system, to plan our resources, absorb the unemployed and put forward war aims that would retain for the Allies the precarious leadership of democratic opinion all over the world. If we to-day find ourselves, as Mr. Chamberlain now admits, in imminent danger of invasion by the Nazis, does not the main responsibility rest on the shoulders of Mr. Chamberlain and those close associates who have controlled British policy for the last three years?

The details of the Government's incompetence in Norway may soon seem comparatively unimportant. Very soon the Dutch coast may also be in German hands. Then Germany will have an even more powerful set of North Sea bases from which to wage war on our shipping and harbours, and the economic loss, already great from the failure to keep our own supplies of Swedish ore and Swedish trade, (let alone to cut off the German supplies), will be fully apparent. The truth which has been brought into the light of day in this week's debate is that always the Government has been too late, too slow, too complacent, too indecisive and too ignorant. Mr. Attlee did well to point out that the seizure of Denmark and Norway had long been a known part of German naval strategy in this war; indeed, this doctrine has been officially explained in Berlin in pamphlet form. No explanation has been forthcoming of why our Secret Service failed to inform the Government of the work of the German Fifth Column in Norway; no one knows why the force collected for Finland was dispersed at the very time that it was decided to lay mines in Norwegian waters and address a note to Oslo and Stockholm offering to counter Nazi strokes in Scandinavia. Was it, as Sir Archibald Sinclair seemed to suggest, that the Finnish force was never really organised at all? No answer was given to Mr. Amery's question—well founded, we believe—about why the Government failed to take notice of warnings of the coming invasion sent from Stockholm and Copenhagen several days before the Nazis delivered their series of well-prepared blows. Mr. Churchill could give no adequate reply to Sir Roger Keyes. All that need be said about Trondheim, the key to the recapture of Norway, is that in spite of warnings the Government were taken by surprise by the swiftness and brilliance of the Nazi stroke, that there were confused councils about the joint naval and military expedition to Trondheim, that an expedition, largely consisting of young and half-trained men, was finally sent in reply to the Norwegian appeal, after a fatal delay with inadequate equipment and apparently without maps or knowledge of the places

in which it would have to land and operate. It may in the circumstances have been right to send the expedition; it was clearly right, in view of Germany's mastery of the air and the lack of air bases (a lack which must have been known even in Whitehall) to withdraw the expedition when it was in danger of capture or destruction. But if Mr. Chamberlain's apology were to be accepted, the only conclusion must be that each successive campaign will be lost, because in that case the Germans will always be the first to know, the first to decide and the first to act.

Naturally this week everyone is discussing Mr. Chamberlain's successor. Clearly he must go, and with Sir John Simon, Sir Samuel Hoare and others who bear a terrible burden of responsibility for bringing us to this pass. Clearly the ablest and most energetic brains in the Labour, Liberal and Conservative Parties must be included in the new Government. Clearly there must be a small War Cabinet without departmental duties; in that Cabinet Mr. Lloyd George and others who have experience and imagination must be included. Few wiser words were said in the entire debate than those in which Mr. Amery asked how, with the present organisation in which no Member of the Government has time from departmental duties to think ahead, it is possible to hope that if another small nation is now attacked, any of the innumerable preparations required for that emergency have been adequately considered, let alone completed.

This brings us to what is perhaps the greatest danger of our present situation. The loss of Mr. Chamberlain and his immediate associates must be an advantage at home and abroad. A new Cabinet, one presumes, may still be in time to reverse the folly of the Government's attitude towards Japan and Russia; it may change the entire temperature and prospects in India. It may pronounce war aims which revive the dwindling hopes of democrats and anti-Fascists in many parts of the world. But it cannot quickly undo the damage that nine years of Conservative National Government has done. It cannot immediately improvise a machine as efficient as Hitler's and it cannot be expected to forestall the blows which everyone expects Hitler to deal within the next few weeks. Ministers have gravely damaged the governmental machine by continuous failure to know their own minds. One of the chief benefits of a change of Ministry is that we may get rid of the domination of Sir Horace Wilson, who is now in a position to veto every good civil service appointment. In the day-by-day administration which in wartime needs great rapidity of decision, the principal civil servants are not less important than the Ministers. To-day, with some exceptions, the upper areas of Whitehall are peopled with tired, cynical and disillusioned men, honest and competent enough for the tempo of 1900, but totally incapable of adjusting their methods or their minds to the needs of 1940. To substitute new and efficient people for these civil servants will not be easy; we need the Lloyd George of twenty-five years ago for the task. It must be done and quickly. A new Government, we repeat, will have an immense task and it will take over the administration of this country at the moment of its greatest peril. The country must not imagine that it can immediately prevent Hitler's further advances. Is it true that a different administration could have done nothing about Norway and by implication can do nothing about all the other countries that may be attacked? It is only true if everything is left too late. No sane person will counsel wild and ill-prepared adventures in areas where Hitler has already prepared the ground. But must another Government always wait for the Quislings? It can counter the work of the Fifth Column, not by sending a novelist to lecture on golf (which was one of the methods adopted in Norway), but by active work and propaganda for the democratic cause as well as by seeing to it that the intelligence service is efficient. If it can do no good by sending an expeditionary force, then it must not send one. If it is to send one, it must organise it in time and prepare it efficiently. Are Germans the only people who can obtain maps or spring diplomatic surprises? We could continue indefinitely the list of things that a new Government and an awakened country must do to preserve its life. There is no time to waste.

RATIONING, PRICE-FIXING AND MR. KEYNES

EVER since Mr. Keynes's book appeared, we have had warnings of the danger of inflation from everyone who could hold a pen: and every housewife in the country has been talking of the way in which prices have already risen. We all agree that something must be done: but very few have so far asked that we should go back to the system which had a real success in 1917–18—that is full control, price-fixing and fairly severe rationing. I believe that rationing is indispensable: but there is no doubt that it has had a bad press. Sir John Orr hates it; Mr. Keynes emphatically does not like it; the Government is, to say the least, half-hearted; I have even heard people say that rationing is useless, because the poor man cannot buy his ration. Now this last remark misses the whole point of the matter. Rationing is merely fixing a *maximum* standard of consumption: as such, it is a sacrifice demanded from the well-to-do; it lops off pleasant superfluities, and brings down their standard to what is necessary for health. But this sacrifice has a powerful effect on prices, and on the national economy generally.

Let us look at the experience of the last war.

Here is an extract from a table given in Beveridge's History of Food Control:

	July, 1914	October, 1917	November, 1918
Principal foods, assuming no subsidy on bread	100	208	248
Other foods	100	214	384
Textiles	100	245	307
Coal	100	135	177

The principal foods are beef, mutton, bacon, fish, flour, bread, butter, cheese, milk, potatoes, eggs, tea and margarine. All were price-controlled at August 1, 1919, except the last three, which had been decontrolled in March and May.

As every elderly person vividly remembers, the rationed foods were sugar, butter, margarine, lard, butchers' meat, bacon, ham, and, for a time, poultry, game, rabbits and offal; with certain additions in various localities.

Now this is a remarkable table. Roughly speaking, all goods had about doubled in prices since 1914—except coal; and coal prices were controlled in 1915. After 1917, the prices of the controlled foods rose, but much more slowly, the others continued their upward flight. Further, the whole business of food control cost the nation nothing; when the Ministry of Food wound up its accounts it had made a profit of one-half of one per cent. (This is, of course, without reckoning the bread subsidy). The coal policy, apparently, was to keep down the price of domestic coal, by raising export prices, and domestic coal did not rise in price after 1917 till control was removed after the war, when a subsidy had to be paid.

But in 1917–18 food rationing was a reality. We were, for instance, rationed in restaurants. It does seem to me the silliest thing in the world to ration the housewife for meat, and to let anyone who chooses go into an expensive restaurant and have a truly magnificent meal. I had some thought of asking the Research Department of the Labour Party to send some of their most competent young men to dine and lunch for a week at the Savoy or Ritz, and keep a record of how much they ate. I am afraid Transport House will put up niggardly and cheeseparing considerations of expense; but perhaps the readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will consider this suggestion.

But seriously, this Government is certainly only playing at rationing, and probably playing at control. They have full powers; for in the first weeks of the war we were ruled by the Civil Service. These praiseworthy public servants had codified and tidied up all the measures of the last war; and thrust them into the hands of Ministers to produce in Parliament. The Ministers took what was given them; Parliament accepted everything with lamb-like docility; and at the end of a very short time the Government was in possession of all the power it had in 1918. In food, especially, the position was just where Lord Rhondda had left it, with those weaknesses and exceptions which are detailed in Beveridge's Food Control. My own private belief is that those same intelligent civil servants, nourished in the Rhondda tradition, had gone a good deal further; and if we could only look at the pigeon-holes we should see a most comprehensive scheme for real control and real rationing of all the necessaries of life. But we are not likely to see this; because it is only too plain that the Government, having in its hands all the powers of 1917, is not likely to use them, until we arrive at a point where the rise in prices becomes unbearable.

I think it would be an act of real folly to wait till then. The humblest of us have realised the dangers of inflation—thanks very

largely to Mr. Keynes—and the cleverest cannot dissent from his analysis of the position. It is absolutely necessary in wartime to reduce national consumption; this can be done either by leaving people less money to spend, or by preventing them from spending; if we leave things alone competition will put up prices. Our choice is, therefore, between compulsory saving and strict rationing. Now Mr. Keynes does not like rationing. He says, and it is true, that it is very uncomfortable; he says that to a certain extent it is wasteful and incomplete; and ends by saying that "if by a miracle the scheme was completely successful we should merely have arrived, by an elaborate, roundabout and wasteful method," at the same result as if we had adopted compulsory saving.

Compulsory saving is violently unpopular with the ordinary man. Mr. Keynes will say, and he has no doubt a right to say it, that this is because the ordinary man is so stupid. I will not here argue the point whether this obstinate distrust as to whether, or when, we should get back the savings, or if the capital levy would really be imposed, is so stupid a thing after all. Taking, for the purposes of argument, that the Keynes scheme is perfect, I note this general dislike as a political fact. And I also know that last time the trials and inconveniences of rationing were quite cheerfully accepted. The comfortable classes—and it is a fact creditable to human nature—really liked to feel that they were, to however small an extent, sharing in the hardships of war; and that by these petty inconveniences and petty shifts they were helping the seamen and the Navy. That, too, is a political fact.

The two roads lead the same way. We know that people will go quite docilely along the road which Mr. Keynes says is so hard and disagreeable; we know that they will kick and jib if they are asked to go along the road that he says is so easy. And that is a consideration which every intelligent statesman (or any alert politician) is certain not to overlook.

But to stand still at the crossways is fatal. For the Keynes's argument is conclusive; if we will not do either of these things, we shall have inflation and wages chasing prices up and up the vicious spiral.

And my own view is that the Labour movement should demand full control and strict rationing and price-fixing now; for, in order of time, keeping down prices comes first; and the only politically available instrument to our hands is the one which we have tried before.

A. SUSAN LAWRENCE

A LONDON DIARY

Monday

THE newspapers show that the revolt against the Government will not this time be shadow boxing. Only the *Daily Telegraph* continues to pretend that all is well and the Government the best we can expect. Even the *Times* is outspoken and the *Manchester Guardian* is the more powerful, as always on the rare occasions when it hits out, because of its habitual caution. The *Daily Mail* carries a letter suggesting names for an alternative Government. The letter is from an anonymous politician, said by the *Daily Telegraph* to be Stafford Cripps, just back from his visits to India, China, Moscow, Tokio and Washington. The importance of the letter is that someone has at last started people talking about alternative Cabinets. I think it will break the Chamberlain spell; he is, after all, only there because of the lack of an obvious alternative. If the alternative appears even the solid Tory phalanx will see they cannot go on simply trusting Chamberlain till Hitler is in Aberdeen. And, by the way, talking of Aberdeen, why not just as much as anywhere else? Mr. Chamberlain spoke of possible invasion in the House last week. I shall amuse myself by writing the speech Mr. Chamberlain would make explaining to the House why we could not defend Scotland.

* * *

After explaining that the attack had been on Aberdeen and not, as first supposed, on Abergavenny, his remarks would go rather like this:

> The Army is to be congratulated on a brilliant achievement in withdrawing from the Highlands under the very noses of the German aeroplanes. Not a man was lost in the evacuation of Aberdeen. I am glad to be able to add that the Scots are still bravely defending themselves in their native glens. The House will appreciate that Scotland is a difficult country to defend and that, regrettable though it is that we are unable to maintain our Northern positions and determined though we are to restore the independence and integrity of this proud people now crushed beneath the German yoke, the immediate military objectives are better served by the defence of Hadrian's Wall than by running unnecessary risks to our man-power under the terribly heavy strain of German air power. We must not allow the enemy to disperse our strength from the main field of battle. In the difficult circumstances our troops have done magnificently. We have forced the Germans to use much of their precious petrol, and they have committed the classical strategic blunder of an invasion, unsupported by command of the sea. It is too early yet to strike a profit and loss account, but my impression is that on balance the Allies have gained. Those who are tempted to hasty criticism should remember that no one has ever got anything very much out of Aberdeen anyway, and that though we were well aware that Hitler might strike, there were many points for him to choose from, and the young recruits who have been exposed to a gruelling campaign on the Scottish moors were the only ones available at the time. This withdrawal, regrettable though it is, will not weaken the determination of any Englishman or Scotsman to fight on until we have freed the world from the Nazi menace. I am more confident than ever of Allied victory . . . .

I wish this were a joke.

* * *

Tuesday

The letter that appeared in yesterday's *Daily Mail* has had offspring. Now that someone has had the courage to begin the game of amateur Cabinet-making, it is becoming a popular pastime. John Bouverie's Cabinet selection in the *News Chronicle* brings in able outsiders like Frank Pick. We can all select our own teams. The important point is that these suggestions show a new determination really to get rid of the Old Men of Munich and thoroughly to explore the alternative material available. One of the suggested Premiers is Lloyd George; he is, after all, only the age of Clemenceau when he became Prime Minister of France in the last war. He is still full of vigour; as Prime Minister he would have the advantage of war experience (it is an astonishing thing that Chamberlain has never consulted him in this war!) and he could be relied on, I think, to find capable men to do the job. He is not young enough to repeat his performance of 1916, but he is one of the few people who might have the authority in a crisis to turn out tired and overworked civil servants and to end the paralysing Treasury control which stops anyone doing anything quickly. If Lloyd George is too old for Premier, then I agree with the *Daily Mail* letter that he should be in the War Cabinet as Minister without portfolio. I think Halifax a bad choice; his nobility is an asset, but he is nothing like sufficiently akin to this bestial world. Sinclair has good points, but not in my view the right Premier. Churchill must stick to strategy, even if he is overworked and open to criticism over Norway. Who is there? It is a fascinating game.

* * *

Victor Gollancz's pamphlet, *Where Are You Going?—An Open Letter to Communists*, reaches me to-night. It is a vigorous and desperately sincere appeal to Communists, with whom Gollancz has worked in the Left Book Club, not to be trapped into a pro-Nazi policy. It contains the full text of the now notorious Ulbricht article, the significance of which was first pointed out in this journal. Gollancz's analysis shows that this article stands Lenin on his head; the German Communists are not, it seems, primarily to fight against their own bourgeoisie, as the British workers are, but, since Britain is now the "most reactionary Power," they are to procure an Allied defeat as prelude to a German revolution. One of the most remarkable quotations in this well-documented pamphlet is the *Daily Worker's* account of the activities of the Norwegian Communists in representing the invasion of Norway as entirely the fault of Britain and France. Only the Communists, says the *Daily Worker*, have been allowed to continue to publish their paper under Hitler. No wonder, since they publish exactly what the Nazis want published! And no wonder that Gollancz reminds English Communists of their long and no doubt sincere fight against Fascism and begs them to think where they are going and whether they want a Hitler victory over Britain.

* * *

As it happened, I got the chance at the week-end of seeing how rank-and-file Communists had reacted to the new Party line in an industrial town In their public speeches they simply denounce the imperialist war, accuse the Allies of attempting to spread it and praise the peace-policy of Russia. Their chief material, however, is the home front: here they denounce profiteering and the Keynes plan with equal bitterness and call for increases in wages and a better standard of living for the people. One worker, who was standing by me in a small street-corner crowd, drily observed to me that they did not need Communists to obtain high wages in that particular town: a few days ago an advertisement appeared in the local paper offering applicants for semi-skilled work £10 a week. All the same, the Communists are vocal, and in the factories are recognised (with Lord Haw-Haw) as the only opposition to the Government. They win sympathy *in spite of* their policy just because many workers distrust and hate the ruling gang, as they have every justification for doing. They automatically respect anyone who sounds agin' the Government. In private I found the Communists extremely candid.

Each of the three local leaders I talked to told me that the only hope of Socialism lay in defeat and argued what he supposed to be a Leninist tactic. When I suggested that, since Britain possessed a strong central government and middle-class, it was the failure of the Spartakists in Germany, not the success of the Communists in Russia, which should be examined, one of the Communists readily replied that the civil war might well end temporarily in the defeat of the workers; but such set-backs were inevitable and must be faced by the sincere Socialist. I got the impression from these conversations that some at least of the Party workers know precisely what they are doing, though they may not realise its consequences. They want the Party suppressed and are laying their plans on the assumption that we shall be defeated and that defeat will give them their chance. But if this is indeed the parallel period to the last days of Tsardom (with the somewhat important difference that Britain is a bourgeois country) where is Lenin and where is the old guard of Bolshevists, trained by a lifetime of illegal work for the day of trial? I found a child-like faith that British Bolshevists can be made by reading the works of Lenin and selling the *Daily Worker*. Many of the local Communists are really anarchists at heart with a conscious hatred of war and bloodshed and exploitation and a quite unconscious acceptance of British liberties. If we were defeated and experienced Nazi domination, I am convinced that most of them would discover their nationalism—when it was too late. Brest Litovsk was a savage treaty, but Russia was large enough to cede huge areas and leave plenty of room for a workers' State to be built behind the new frontiers. Personally, I have always favoured an early peace if one had been possible. But Hitler has, I'm sure, no intention of giving us one and what would happen to the British workers if Hitler won?

* * *

Wednesday

Great excitement as well as deep foreboding in the House of Commons tonight. Talking over the prospects and difficulties of the future with M.P.s in the House to-night, I remarked that the new Government would have a difficult job not to seem responsible for the next batch of disasters. Aneurin Bevin said: "Do you know the Chinese proverb 'you cannot prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head, but that you can prevent them from building nests in your hair'?"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mrs. Hall.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Immediately we learned that there was any doubt about the news we gave it the heading "Captain Fleming Reported Killed in Norway." We must give our readers credit for some intelligence. Such a heading would not cause even the most sensitive of Captain Fleming's relatives more than a momentary apprehension.—Sydney Carroll in a letter to *The Times*.

Rev. Jimmy Haddow, Glasgow's conjuring minister, has died. . . . He found he could do conjuring tricks when he was twelve years of age and it was this which led him to take up the Ministry.—*The Sunday Post*.

The whirligig of time brings in its revenges. On Wednesday the Communists at Oxford tried to hold a May Day meeting. As they marched over Magdalen Bridge and up the famous "High" the undergraduates pelted them all the way with the ammunition that is traditional for showing disgusted disagreement—tomatoes, oranges and eggs (the rottener the better), and stink-bombs.

So far as Oxford was under the necessity of redeeming its credit it has done so.—Candidus in the *Daily Sketch*.

DEMOCRATS ALL

I was in the buffet of a London railway station, to-day, when in walked two privates—well-to-do men, by their accents and purses, for they ordered large whiskies at the new price.

Then there arrived a second-lieutenant. He had a gin and French.

Finally, a full-blown major bustled into the bar. "Half-pint of bitter, Miss," he said.

He polished it off in one gulp and departed; but he completed the picture of a completely democratic Army—at least in that public-house.—*Daily Record and Mail*.

The Secretary for War is to be asked by Colonel Burton, in the Commons on Tuesday, whether the national campaign to train golfers to handle rifles to deal with Germans landing by parachute has been inaugurated with his consent.—*Sunday Times*.

THAT GERMANY

England During the Norwegian Crisis

Democratic institutions such as have existed in England up till now are a luxury which an overwhelming naval power can allow itself in normal times or conditions. Certain expressions of these institutions would have to be changed directly England's security was in question. There cannot be two opinions about the value of institutions which are unable to stand a serious test.—*National Zeitung*, April 27th, 1940.

There can be no doubt of Churchill's responsibility for developments in Scandinavia up to the point when Germany seized the initiative in thwarting the efforts of the Western Powers in the Western Nordic area. Documentary proof of this is given by the secret Norwegian report of a speech of Churchill's at a press lunch in London which we publish to-day . . . . The pitiable excuses that weather in Norway was unexpectedly bad, that the tanks had been forgotten (meantime they are to be found at the bottom of the ocean), that the sea-crossing was so long, are designed to efface the memory of the paper English "victory," about which the whole world is laughing. The fact is that the Englishmen who did manage to come into contact with German troops found salvation in flight, if they were not taken prisoner.

With a really astonishing naïvete Hoare declared "in spite of these difficulties the British air arm and the British fleet have a fortnight of brilliant successes behind them." We wish to give our heartiest congratulations.—*Voelkischer Beobachter*, April 29th, 1940.

Total War Correspondents

The new form of war journalism exactly corresponds to the idea of the People's War. Writers and journalists with military training and formed into Propaganda Companies will accompany the troops, fight with them as soldiers, and after the battle send their reports home. Among the infantry shock-troops, the crews of aeroplanes and of battleships, and in the armoured cars, German writers are playing their part in the battle and describing their experiences to the German people. . . . Here are no "battle tourists," as is proved by the published figures of the casualties in the P.C., as the Propaganda Company is now universally called.—*National Zeitung*, April 27th, 1940.

Dr. Frank in Italy

Thanking the University of Modena for the honour it had bestowed upon him, Dr. Frank emphasised the deep spiritual community of Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany. Then he stressed the identity of aim both in jurisprudence and in the development of law. . . . Fascism and National Socialism both recognise that the substance of the people's destiny is of greater significance than the formal problems of legislation and judicial procedure, that the primal values of the nations, their substantial values—race, soil, work, State, national honour—these are the concepts which determine the new development of law. . . . To Italy and Germany belongs the future responsibility for European culture. Italy and Germany will give to the world the decisive form of civilised law.—*Voelkischer Beobachter*, April 29th, 1940.

Gilding the Ersatz Lily

To give Ersatz coffee a harmonious perfection the blending of Zusatz coffee is recommended. In purchasing the coffee ration it is important to divide it into the right proportions of Zusatz and Ersatz coffee. Add a little of Franck's Special Coffee Flavouring and you will obtain through the richness and fragrance a beverage which really tastes of coffee.—Advertisement in *National Zeitung*, April 27th, 1940.

The Dangers of Second Sight

The criminal police in Munich remind the public that during the war every case of prophecy will be punished. In Munich a woman who busied herself with foretelling how the war would go was condemned to six months' imprisonment. She had previously served several sentences for fortune-telling. When she has served her term the woman will be sent off to a concentration camp.—*Frankfurter Zeitung*.

The Long Arm of the Nazi Law

The Court of Appeal in a decision laid it down that the citizen of a foreign country of Jewish extraction, who entices a German citizen of German or kindred blood to cross the frontier and to enter into intimate relations, is liable to punishment. This means that the highest German Court has now decided that a citizen of a foreign State may be guilty of race pollution and can be punished therefore if he returns to German soil.—*National Zeitung*, April 29th, 1940.

NEPOTISM AND THE CIVIL SERVICE

THE task of building an honest, public-spirited and efficient civil service has been a slow one, requiring long decades of patient effort. The process of weakening or demoralising that service can take place in a comparatively short space of time, if the circumstances are favourable. They are favourable for such a disaster at the present time; and there is a considerable danger of its occurring unless drastic steps are taken to change the trends which have been in operation since the war began.

It is well to remind ourselves at the outset that "civil service principles" were first evolved in this country; that the British Civil

Service is, undoubtedly, the finest in the world; and that the nation depends for its success in the war as much on its civil service as on its fighting forces. In all matters relating to the home front, whether in the sphere of supply or food control, air-raid precautions or the regulation of industry, finance or propaganda, the civil service carries responsibility for administrative success or failure, subject to Ministerial direction of policy. In the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry, hundreds of vital positions are occupied by civil servants.

In time of war it is, of course, impossible to follow the practices which normally prevail in peace. The reasons are obvious: a huge expansion of governmental activity must take place at short notice under great pressure; and most of this additional administration is of a transient nature. Hence, the civil service must be rapidly increased by an enormous influx of temporary officials brought in from other walks of life. In consequence, it is impracticable to apply the usual methods of appointment (by open competitive examination, or qualifying examination, or nomination followed by examination), by which men and women whose whole career is to be spent in the service are recruited shortly after leaving school or university.

During the Great War of 1914–18 no systematic methods of any kind were used to replace the peacetime principles. Chaos reigned in the government departments, as elsewhere, so far as the proper use of man power was concerned. Doctors who volunteered for the army in the early days were accepted as tommies and died fighting in the trenches; a famous mathematician who joined up was allowed to spend his time cleaning horses behind the lines; and men and women who were utterly unfit for public administration by character and training crowded into the new Ministries at home.

It has long been recognised that our misuse of man power during the Great War was appallingly wasteful and inefficient both in the military and civil spheres. In order to prevent a similar mistake, plans were drawn up more than two years ago for the more effective use of personnel in the event of war. So far as civil administration is concerned, the most important instrument of selection was to be a Central Register compiled by the Ministry of Labour containing the names and particulars of all the more highly qualified professional men and women who were willing to offer their services in case of need. A very large number of names was obtained—well over 100,000—and although a proportion of these may be chaff rather than wheat, the Register constitutes a vast reservoir of trained specialists and highly educated men and women anxious to serve the country in the present emergency. All specialist and administrative posts were supposed to be filled from this source.

An authoritative account of the extent to which this reservoir of ability has been utilised is not so far available. But the evidence which is coming to hand in piece-meal fashion of the way in which appointments are made is highly disturbing. It indicates that the Register is being side-tracked or ignored; that nepotism and personal pull are the dominating influences in securing jobs; and that the Ministry of Labour and National Service (as it has now become—in name only) is regarded with hostility or disdain by other departments and controls, so far as its function in regulating the proper use of man power in civil administration is concerned.

The integrity and efficiency of the public service is being attacked from two separate directions. One of these is through appointments made partly or wholly on a basis of nepotism. The scramble of socially favoured amateurs and privileged ignoramuses into the Ministry of Information became widely known and bitterly criticised because the press came into close contact with the Ministry in the course of its daily work, and editors were therefore made only too well aware of the kind of person with whom they had to deal. Desperate efforts were made to stem the tide of criticism in Parliament and the press by the appointment of important newspaper men like Mr. Fish and Lord Camrose to leading positions—which they subsequently vacated. Possibly matters are somewhat better in the Ministry of Information than they formerly were, though much remains to be done.

But what about the other new or expanded departments? The staffing of the Ministry of Economic Warfare is perhaps fifty per cent. good and fifty per cent. rotten. The Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Supply, the Air Ministry—to mention no others—contain numerous officials in high positions whose appointments can be explained only in terms of political pull or social influence. Everyone in Whitehall can give examples *ad libitum*, and the regular civil servants are full of resentment.

A Special Correspondent in the *Evening News* on March 11th summarised the position with reasonable accuracy by stating that instead of filling posts in the Civil Service by open competitive examination, many seem to be filled now by wire pulling. "Sometimes the wire pulling is competitive—A makes all sorts of moves to get a job for his relative or friend B, while C is doing his best to get a friend of his own into the post."

The civil service vocational organisations are doing their utmost to resist the onslaught on established standards of impartiality, but they cannot stem the tide without strong support from Parliament and public opinion. The Civil Service Clerical Association is said to have compiled a black list of over 100 appointments to which its members object on the score of influence. The associations are primarily interested in securing an opportunity for promotion to higher posts from regular officials in the lower grades—an aspiration for which there is much to be said up to a certain point; but they are also deeply concerned in maintaining the professional integrity of the service as a whole.

Complaints of failure to use the Central Register have been made in the House of Lords by Lord Leverhulme and Lord Addison. In the House of Commons questions have been asked about particular appointments, such as that of Lord Hankey's son to be his father's private secretary, and of Lord Chatfield's son to be a temporary clerk at the Admiralty with a subsequent rapid promotion to the administrative staff. But Parliament has shown a deplorable failure to realise the magnitude of the issues involved or their importance.

In the Chatfield case, Mr. Creech Jones asked the First Lord whether the Honourable E. L. Chatfield had been registered at a Ministry of Labour Employment Exchange in accordance with the Government's regulations in order to obtain his appointment; and added a number of further questions relating to his promotion, which was said to be causing grave discontent among the experienced permanent staff in the Admiralty. Mr. Churchill gave a lengthy answer, in the course of which he explained that "it is regretted that in the stress of the hours preceding the declaration of war the process of registering at an Employment Exchange was omitted." This remark, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, was greeted with laughter. (Hansard, of course, makes no mention of the hilarious reception.) But what is there to laugh at in the son of a Minister receiving special treatment in breach of regulations? Mr. Churchill ended his reply, in which he justified Mr. Chatfield's rapid promotion by his zeal and abilities, by observing that "the respect in which Mr. Chatfield's name is held [in the Admiralty] has proved in no way prejudicial to the public interest."

One would have thought quite the contrary. The mere fact of relationship to a Minister or other eminent person should certainly not handicap a man from making his way according to his merits; but it should prevent him from receiving even the slightest degree of privilege. In so far as the prescribed procedure or regulations are ignored, to that extent will the general public be tempted to draw conclusions which may be unwarranted and unfair to the official concerned, but nevertheless detrimental to the public interest.

If Parliament regards the sidetracking of the Ministry of Labour's Central Register as an occasion for laughter, how can the departments be expected to take it seriously? In point of fact, they are entirely free to use it or ignore it as they please. The Treasury has instructed them to apply for appropriate names to be submitted by the Ministry of Labour, but there is no means of compelling them to do so, and nothing to prevent them from ignoring any names which may be submitted. There is no control at all over departmental appointments to-day.

The second main source of attack on standards of administration has come from the business community. The numerous governmental controls which have been set up to regulate particular industries in the national interest during the war have in many cases fallen into the hands of favoured members of the industry concerned. The disadvantages of such a course are obvious. It means that we are thrown back on the "guild" type of self-regulation (similar to that found in the Marketing Boards) which regards the interest of the producer or distributor as being identical with the public interest, and is hostile or indifferent to the consumer's interest. Moreover, the individuals who manage to get themselves appointed to control a trade or industry are placed in a position of formidable power over their competitors. Usually it is the big men who secure office, and there are innumerable ways in which they can manipulate things to the disadvantage of the smaller fry.

Quite clearly, the Government controls over trade and industry ought not to be in the hands of members of the regulated business, but should be administered by civil servants *de carrière* or by disinterested outsiders.

Equally clearly, the essential remedy for the present unsatisfactory state of affairs lies with Parliament. The Labour Party should advocate the immediate creation of a committee of the House of Commons to scrutinise all appointments and promotions to posts over a certain figure—say £300 a year. If they can be justified by the

appointee's qualifications and record, as shown by the dossier, well and good. If not, the matter should be reported to the House.

This is a matter which transcends purely Party issues and is of vital national importance. But the Labour Party, by virtue of its philosophy and structure, should lead the way in fighting the inroads on our civil service standards which the possessors of wealth and privilege and influence are making under cover of the war emergency.

STAND OF THE OLD BRIGADE

MEMBERS in front of him,
Members each side of him,
Members *behind* him
Volley'd and thunder'd.
Why had the Nazis won?
Why were we on the run?
What had been left undone?
What would be left of him
If he had blunder'd?

Stormed at from here and there,
Calmly he said "Beware
Lest by land, sea and air
All of our forces are
Shatter'd and sunder'd!
Ours not to set the pace,
Ours not to seize a base,
Ours to pursue our course,
Bound for another place
When battle thunder'd
Though the whole Nazi race
Conquer'd and plunder'd."

Back from the Norway fjord
Stepped the Old Guard aboard,
Safe, while the Commons' horde
Questioned and thunder'd.
No one should lose a seat,
Safe back to Downing Street
He led the Cabinet,
Safe till the next defeat,
While the world wonder'd,
For it had seemed to them
Someone had blunder'd.

"Close up the ranks," he said,
"Hands off the Old Brigade,
Not to be sunder'd.
Neutrals, be not afraid!
England, be not dismay'd!
No one has blunder'd!"

SAGITTARIUS

STARSHINE

I AM one of those who can never skip the astrology feature in a Sunday paper. Sometimes I am shocked when I consider the increasing hold that astrology is getting on modern men and women, who have given up belief in Joshua and his trumpet only to revert to faith in the Scorpion and the Bull; but, none the less, I wonder whether I myself am as sceptical about the stars and their influences as I ought to be. A strong-jawed will to disbelieve was never part of my make-up. There is 25 per cent. of me that listens readily to stories about ghosts, sea-serpents and the predictions of fortune-tellers. In the same way, I cannot help quarter-believing the rosier forecasts of the astrologers. It is one of my methods of wishful thinking. I become more of a rationalist when the astrologer turns pessimist.

It would be a good thing, it seems to me, if a scientific committee were set up to examine the past predictions of astrologers and their proved truth or falsity. The astrologers themselves tell us mainly of their successes. There was an astrologer last year who foretold that English men and women would have a pleasant surprise in the 1940 Budget, as there would be remissions of taxation owing to a slackening in the armaments race. It was a charming prophecy, but it is not to be expected that he will shout about it from the housetops. There was a French astrologer who in 1934 claimed to have foretold the death of M. Barthou at the time of the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia, and who, elated by his triumph, forecast the end of Mussolini, described as "a man fatally stricken." Mussolini's day of destiny, he declared, was January the 27th, 1936, after which, according to the stars, his fall would be rapid. This is another prophecy not likely to be boasted about. Again, at a meeting of English astrologers in 1936, a peaceful settlement of the European situation and drastic changes in the Government of Italy were predicted. That, too, gives one's belief in astrology a slight shake.

Astrologers, of course, do not always agree among themselves. The personal element enters even into the interpretation of the messages of the stars. Wishful thinkers will be glad to learn, however, that there is one matter on which all astrologers are agreed—the downfall of Adolf Hitler. In *Astrology in Everyday Life*,* Mr. Rupert Gleadow writes: "All astrologers have always declared that Hitler would fall from power, and it has always been plain to them that war would be the ruin of his position. Before the end of 1939 the *Astrological War Commentary* had predicted that 1940 would see the end of the war and of Hitler as a ruler." I cannot deny that this prediction gives me pleasure; but a lingering scepticism makes me wonder whether "all astrologers" includes all German astrologers. We are often told that Herr Hitler himself is a believer in astrology and that his actions are greatly influenced by readings of the heavens. Did his astrologers fear to speak the truth last September or did they simply bungle the interpretation of his horoscope? Or was Herr Hitler mad enough to believe Herr von Ribbentrop rather than the astrologers? A wise man would always pin more faith to the word of an astrologer than to the word of Herr von Ribbentrop.

In the book from which I have quoted we have the best possible evidence of the changed attitude in England, even among the educated classes, to what fifty years ago was the discredited science of astrology. The author, we are told, has had a brilliant career at Oxford, and his book bears the imprint of one of the most intelligent—one of the most intellectual, indeed—firms of English publishers. The author is so certain, of the genuineness of the science and art of astrology that he regards disbelievers in it with contempt. "Many fools," he declares, "have attempted to discredit astrology without understanding it. They succeeded only in showing that they did not know what they were talking about." Again he writes: "Of the many objections that have been raised against astrology all without exception seem to be founded on ignorance." To this it may be replied that the civilised world, after having had experience of astrology for centuries, would scarcely have lost faith in it if it had proved to be so useful a science as Mr. Gleadow claims that it is. After all, astrology is not in the position of a religion the truth of which can be neither proved nor disproved. The evidence of horoscopes read and of predictions made has long been in existence; and yet somehow the civilised world, including the most scientific of the moderns, has not been convinced by it. Not even the support of Tycho Brahe, Kepler and Newton has been sufficient to preserve for astrology a place among the sciences. If it has come back with a rush in our time, it has come back, as regards most of those who believe in it, not as a science, but as a superstition.

Possibly one of the reasons why the world grew weary of astrology was that it was almost impossible for the ordinary man to distinguish between the fraudulent and the genuine among its professors. If the astrologers had built a university and had conferred degrees without which no one would have been allowed to practise the art, we should be in a better position to examine its credentials. Astrology, however, has always been the playground of rogues and charlatans as well as of honest men. In this it resembles the profession of Spiritualist mediumship. I myself have a more or less open mind about Spiritualism; I can more easily believe in the existence of spirits than in a universe in which man is the top of creation; but I have no means of testing the genuineness of the Spiritualist phenomena. I have attended only one Spiritualist séance at which an alleged spirit felt gently in the hair above my temple like the forefoot of a mouse. It gave me an eerie sensation in the dark, and I was told that, if it did it again, I must say: "Thank you, kind spirit." It did it again and I said: "Thank you, kind spirit." Conan Doyle, who was present had a conversation with the spirit of his dead brother, and more than once in the course of it said: "This is evidential." Then, towards the end, a cold wind did undoubtedly sweep round the floor, though every window was closed and thickly curtained. Finally, my hostess cried out that her necklace was gone, and, when the lights were turned up, it was lying in the middle of the floor. When I left the séance, I still had an open mind; but some years later, my host, who would have staked his life on the honesty of the medium, turned on

* Faber and Faber, 8*s.* 6*d.*

him and denounced him publicly as a fraud. The same sort of thing must often have happened in the days when men consulted astrologers.

Mr. Gleadow gives an impressive list of men of genius who believed in astrology; but I think the list of men of genius who disbelieved in it would be still more impressive. Few have taken it seriously since Swift wrote Isaac Bickerstaff's *Prediction for the Year* 1708. None the less, so great is Mr. Gleadow's faith in it that he believes that, if astrological calculations had been made in time, the *Titanic* disaster might have been averted, for, he declares, "ships have their horoscopes as well as men."

He also believes that astrologers could do much to prevent unhappy marriages. They could warn Taurus, for example, not to fall in love with Sagittarius. They could explain that "a person who has Mars very strong should never marry one whose Mars is weak." On the other hand, "if one person has the Sun in the eighth degree of Gemini and the other has the moon in the same degree, there is a conjunction and they will agree together." Astrology, it is claimed, is equally useful in medicine. Thus, if you were born (as I was) an Arian, you will find that the salt, Kali Phos, "is especially useful for headaches, tiredness of the brain and all forms of nervous debility." Do I believe this? Well, I am rather inclined to think that, if I discovered a small packet of Kali Phos in the medicine cupboard, I should give it a trial.

My chief interest in astrology, however, is for the present political. And the astrologers whose political forecasts I like best are those who tell me that what I want to happen is going to happen. Luckily, of these, Mr. Gleadow is one. I have already quoted one of his passages about Herr Hitler; and he increases my confidence in his sagacity when he tells how on February the 14th, 1934, he foretold the Roehm purge in the sentence: "During the current year Hitler will suffer a great loss of popularity owing to sudden and unexpected mortality, not due to disease or war, among his storm troopers." Take Hitler's horoscope, again, which foretold the Munich Pact and its consequences. "The Ascendant of the pact was the place of his Saturn; and that signified two things: for the pact, that he would destroy it, and for Hitler, that the pact was a step towards his ruin." How charming is divine astrology! It is difficult at times not to believe that there is something in it.

"Astrologers," says Mr. Gleadow, "do not simply believe in astrology; they have evidence that it works." May we, too, have this evidence in the year 1940! Y. Y.

NOTES ON SHOWS

In this country never before such an interest in painting as to-day—and not only in London. In country places where a decent picture, old or new, has never been seen, crowds flock to good contemporary shows. Expensive French pictures have fled, giving at last a fair chance to native artists, who sell remarkably. If they survive, the English School in twenty years should hit a new level.

Graham Sutherland at the Leicester Galleries

At once most impressive. Whole room sonorous, blacks and pinks, yellows, crimsons, greens like a surge of strings, all displaying extraordinary energy of attack. A cumulative effect of certainty and power that I have never had from an English contemporary. At the National Gallery show most pictures seem faded, drained of colour. Sensibility and delicacy are our native virtues in paint, and most attempts at strength land in vulgarity. (Matthew Smith, a conspicuous exception, but his paint is often coarse.) Sutherland, I'm told, has French blood. He has looked, of course, at Picasso; one of these paintings, *Rocky Landscape with Cairn*, is Braquish in colour, in calmness, and even in the gesture with which a sliver of white is thrown on the edge of a grey form; sometimes, too, I am reminded of Masson. But the affinity in form is with Greco, in feeling with D. H. Lawrence in his best poems, a romantic self-identification with Nature. Some drawings explain the method. A careful drawing from nature, squared up, translated on to the canvas, simplified in colour, and recreated in an elaborate texture of pigment. Thus a "dark hill with hedges and fields" comes to look like an abstract, though the forms are all transcribed. These black and pink paintings are butterflies' wings, lacy and precarious. Sutherland's pictures difficult for most people to approach, despite the sensuous richness and delicacy. The forms are organic not architectural, which sometimes obscures the logic of the composition. Occasionally a surrealist flavour, which I dislike—the disquieting suggestion of animal or genital shapes intrudes on aesthetic contemplation. *Association of Oaks*, for instance, makes a caricature of the human couple. Even *Green Tree Form: Interior of Woods*, the best painted work in the show, too breasted for my taste, but I hate probes at my subconscious. In the other big painting, *Black Landscape*, he has tried to balance an intricate left side with a massively simple right side—ingenious, but not, I think, successful, though packed with splendid painting. The small gouaches most interesting: since his first show, eighteen months ago, he has become strikingly stronger, richer, more assured, and these little pictures seem to prophesy the next development—higher and more varied colours. The more I gaze at Sutherland's work, the deeper my admiration. What other painter under forty is there in any country whose achievement is already so decisive?

Walter Goetz, also at the Leicester Galleries

Offenbach after Bartok. Better, therefore, look at these before immersion in the Sutherlands. Adroit, charming, witty, the work of a man with highly intelligent eyes, who loves France. *La Mairie* and *Chaurez le Beaune* epitomise the motorist's nostalgic memories of a hundred French villages, so do a dozen sketches of Concarneau, Avallon and the Côte d'Or. Acute selection of the characteristic facts, elegant handwriting, and, when he lets himself go, a remarkable sense of gaiety in colour, which he should work to develop. A natural colourist, I suspect, who has so far concentrated on line.

Nine Painters at the Lefevre

An ill-assorted party, the guests exposing one another's shortcomings. Derek Hill, for instance, is still only a student. His performance is pleasant and unpretentious, but not yet ready for the concert platform. He has learnt carefully a French idiom, and displays natural grace. Colin MacInnes, again, shows a *Self Portrait* that is as pretty as a picture: but it is not a picture, it is the mildest of happy sketches. Under the menace of the war, one can't blame painters for doing their practising in public. Tibble, though older, still disappointingly tentative; I like the sea-sketch, and the Reading landscape has beautiful paint. I still believe in him. Quentin Bell, much more thorough—a pair of Still Lives with space carefully explored, rich paint and colour. *The Mountain* is a spill. Thank Heaven for a young painter who takes his fences. Thérèse Lessore, honourable in the technique of the new Sickerts—blanched views of Bath, sure in drawing, and the tones thoughtful, Vanessa Bell, not at her best. Seems to be pushing her way to a deeper exploration of forms. A full-length portrait, with the difficulties never shirked. The head and shoulders are made to prevail over the vast expanse of dress and background, but at a heavy cost, for the flesh-painting is laborious. The front room at the Lefevre is so ill-lighted that the first time I saw the picture its rich, sombre colour was invisible. Three Still Lives, rare arrangements of colour. In two of them a mixture of palette-knife and brush makes the texture rather sulky. Duncan Grant—*Lady in a Lavender Dress* bewitching, the colour most delicate, the pose of the body and the placing of the head on the shoulders masterly. *Girl at Piano*, a large and very ambitious painting. Composition a series of vertical forms, with orthodox diagonal buttresses in the lower corners, but I think the picture needs further foreground. The girl's back has much less substance than the empty armchair which dominates the picture. Every other detail very completely realised—most exceptional to see a modern picture, especially in England, pushed so far. Every inch of the canvas loaded, and one could cut a dozen lovely little pictures out of it. Look at the handkerchief on the girl's head, the bowl, the two pots, the music lying on the piano top. But the picture does not flow, the tones fail to carry the rhythm through, the objects are too separately realised. This surprises in Grant, a master of decorative painting with a natural, as it were Italian, grace, who has so often carried a melody *legato* right through a picture. Here he seems to be deliberately stemming a facility that he distrusts. But the picture is far more remarkable than it may seem to the careless visitor, and rewards long study.

Duncan Grant at the Calmann Gallery

Drawings and water-colours, some of them nearly thirty years old, almost all of them enchanting. Extreme elegance resulting from natural grace and intense study of Old Masters. A gay artist, born out of his time into a distressed age: he should have been a contemporary of Fragonard or Tiepolo or Correggio or the fifteenth-century Sienese. Could have debased his gifts to become a Philpot or a Dufy—preferred to work against the grain—a lyrical poet often writing carefully considered, very skilful prose. Little place in present society for his particular genius. The *tondo* of a nude mother and child has the spontaneous grace of the Renaissance Italians or th Elizabethans, a modulation of delicate curves. The whole sho[w] makes for happiness—even the prices are inviting.

Thomas Carr at Wildenstein's

Euston Road drawing embellished with melting colours, often pretty, sometimes pretty-pretty. *Gathering Seaweed*, a startling success, except for the cart, which looks too small. *Charlotte St.*, *Waterfall*, and *Girl in Bed* specially pleasing. Pictures to delight those who know nothing about painting—yet honourable, most of them.

The Royal Academy

Five or six pictures by new boys, looking lonely and ill at ease. Regrettably few problem-pictures and costume-pieces—otherwise the usual standard is maintained. Characteristic works by Messrs. Clack, Cogle, Gotch, Greenup and le Stalker, and Mesdames Dongworth, Gosheron, Rotinoff, Coit, Wijbrandi and Bingguely-Lejeune.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

GEORGE LANSBURY

TWELVE years ago George Lansbury wrote in his autobiography:

> My political faith remains just what it has been during the past thirty-five years. I am a firm believer in Socialism. . . . I have risen to some of the highest positions in the Labour movement. It is certain that, wherever I find myself, whatever position I occupy, it is and will be impossible for me to think or act other than as a Socialist.

This statement was more literally true than the majority of the statements which autobiographists make about themselves. George Lansbury was, above all things, a humanitarian Socialist, and set the principles of Socialism above everything else in his life. Even upon occasions when he seemed to put the claims of Socialism second to those of feminism—as in the pre-war women's suffrage campaign—or of pacifism, when he resigned the leadership of the Labour Party because of its support of sanctions against Italy—the contradiction was only apparent. For on neither of those issues did he feel that he was deserting Socialism; he felt that true Socialism, the Socialism in which he believed, presupposed both complete sex-equality and the abandonment of the weapon of war, and that the Socialism of those who opposed either was at best an incomplete Socialism. And no one, of all his opponents, ever seriously questioned the sincerity of his faith.

He was a humanitarian Socialist. His enemies frequently called him a sentimental Socialist; and he would proudly have accepted the epithet. That is to say, he was a Socialist, not because he had had any particular economic training or had accepted any particular thesis about the economic destiny of the world, but simply because he hated injustice and hated suffering wherever he saw them and whatever excuses might be made for them, and because, throughout his political career, he always refused to temporise on grounds of expediency with what he thought to be wrong. In this sense, he was no politician; he would never have taken office, or clung to office, at the expense of his principles, because he felt it important that he should remain there. Yet he was an admirable leader of the Labour Party in the House; he constantly astonished people by the shrewdness of his judgment and his skilful management of men; and some of his opponents, deceived by the simplicity of his self-expression into thinking that they were dealing with a political natural, were moved upon occasion to denounce him as a kind of Machiavelli—a wolf in ultra-sheep's clothing. It was always a dangerous mistake to treat G. L. as an innocent merely because he spoke innocently and admired innocence.

Born in 1859, the son of a timekeeper employed by Brassey, the great railway contractor, Lansbury, after an adolescence spent in odd jobs, and an early marriage, emigrated in 1884 to Queensland, where he had a tough time. He returned the following year, made his debut into politics by denouncing the treatment of emigrants, and thereafter served for some time as a Liberal, while earning his living in his father-in-law's timber business, of which he subsequently became the head. Thus statistically, for the greater part of his life, he belonged to the small-employer category; but he never lost at all the sympathy with, and understanding of, the class in which he had been born. This gave him immense weight in all political discussion which was concerned with realities; while, unlike so many leaders of working-class origin, he thoroughly liked and appreciated the "intellectuals"; he could always bring their proposals back to earth by his profound and instinctive knowledge of the class to which they were trying to appeal. If G. L. opposed a suggestion, on whatever grounds, the intellectual who had any political sense would at least take it back and think it over. His oratory, which was not oratory, but the simple expression of a warm-hearted man with a big voice, was one aspect of this quality, and so was the regard in which he was held by the rank-and-file of labour. More than any other leader of his time—possibly more than any working-class leader since Cobbett—he was felt to be the representative of the common man, and it is by the common man in his millions that he will be mourned.

He was the people's man; but especially he was Poplar's man. At most from the first moment he entered politics, his house in Bow Road was not only his own headquarters, but the home of every active worker in the East End who needed help or advice, who had a cause to plead or a grievance to remedy. He was at once the Don Quixote and the Santa Claus; and probably he was never happier than when entertaining the children of Bow to a Christmas party, or more certainly convinced of his cause than when he led the Poplar Guardians to the law courts and to prison in a successful protest against the unfair burden which the rating system laid upon the poor of London.

George Lansbury was all of a piece, solid, a hater of shams, of cruelty and injustice, wonderfully disinterested, of unlimited kindness and generosity, a Christian who really loved his enemies while he fought them and was loved by them even when they feared him. C.

POEM

MEMORY, out of that unmeasurable cave,
Man's mind, loaded with all the myths of the world, in wave after wave
Approaches, echoes, crumbles upon the moaning shore:

I see dull Seneca who slipped into thin metal slots each phrase he heard,
Proust, feathered and finicky, with the oblique microscopical view of a bird,
And that huge-hearted, visionary Russian, foaming and grovelling upon the prison floor;

Rimbaud, black as an effigy, stalking past the boiling Abyssinian stones,
Vasari fussing with his idolatrous soft paws among immortal bones,
Colourless Vaughan whose childhood fancied in each rock a whitehot core;

And then that scampering Scot from Ayr whose ear was slyer than it seemed,
The thin Viennese who saw the end and the beginning of all in all that people dreamed,
Kafka who stood appalled and blinded in front of an everlasting door.

All of them men who felt the cool proximity of the dead,
Who followed the staggering path from heart to heart like a silken thread,
All of them insufficiently loved and discordantly equipped to adore.

Nothing they saw or suffered was ever enough to cure mankind
Of the platitudes of the deaf or the flights of fancy of the blind
Which grow forever wilder on this clattering planet: more

And more as they strove to see more clearly they slowly moved away
From the simple speechless unexplainable ardors of each day,
The sparkling stream of marvels which even the dullest senses pour

Across our little afternoon—love, music, hurricane
Enter and rush like ghosts through that old cave, the human brain.
And to what end? We stumble, fumble, sneeze and snore,

Knowing that even the present is lost and the past not ever sure,
Struggling to keep rich the past and yet the present pure,
We fall and break our hearts in the darkness of all that we endure.

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

CREATURE COMFORTS

Of course, some people are of the opinion that material comforts are everything, that poverty is humiliating, that man cannot rise to his proper human status unless he achieves a certain level of prosperity. Under the influence of prosperity, they say, he opens up, his mind bursts into blossom like a cherry-tree, he simply shoots up to a higher level of development and starts doing things which are all to the good of everyone else.

We have no objection to this view as far as poverty is concerned. It certainly does humiliate man, and makes it difficult for him to keep within the limits of his humanity. But as far as material comforts are concerned, their possession does not always guarantee the right results.

Here is the case in point. At our works we had once a courier called Fedor. He had come from the country and was very poor indeed. So poor that he had no other shoes but a pair of wooden sabots.

There's no doubt that he was a very coarse person. He was fond of swearing and of drink. He liked rows and even fighting.

At first he lived in our communal hostel with other workers. And many of us avoided him on account of his swinish habits. In the end he was called before the managing committee and given a good dressing down.

He was told that his sort of behaviour could not continue and would not be tolerated.

"You trade union leaders are reproaching me for my behaviour," he answered to this. "But you don't trouble to find out why it happens that I behave in this way."

"Well, why do you?" they asked him.

"Because," he replied, "I am not living as I want to live. I live alone, without my family, without my wife. My wife and family are perhaps living far away in the country. I'm unhappy because I'm parted from them. My two young children are probably working as cowherds, and have to be exposed to all sorts of weather. And I myself live here like a yokel. I have no change of clothes, and there's no one to make my bed when I come home tired and want to lie down. And you're surprised at my drinking and hitting people when I get drunk. That's why it happens."

The Committee were quite embarrassed by this explanation and decided to give him a separate room straight away.

Soon after he got a room to himself he made his wife and his two young cowherds come up from the country.

He settled down to live with them, but soon we saw that he was drinking as before, making frightful rows, hitting people across the face, and also kicking and smacking his young cowherds.

In the end he was called before the management again.

"Yes, I'm still behaving like a swine," he admitted. "I still have a drop now and again, and hit chaps when I am in liquor. This is because I feel so upset at seeing scenes of poverty in front of me. We haven't got anything better than a primus stove to cook dinner on. Six of us are living in one room. My wife keeps on quarrelling with her mother, and I knock them all about because it makes me sick to look at their ignorance and lack of culture. This life eats into me like rust into iron. And I must add that my window opens into a backyard. If it opened on to a river for instance, I would perhaps be sitting before it quietly every day, singing songs and looking at ducks standing on their heads, or what not."

Again everyone felt very embarrassed, and they said to him:

"We're building a new block of flats as you probably know. We'll give you a flat in it. You'll have gas laid on and central heating. You'll have all the latest inventions there. And then you'll have the chance to show your real nature."

And soon he was given a flat in the new block. Two rooms and a bathroom. Including three cupboards in the walls. And with the windows opening on to a garden. A garden in which fruit-trees blossomed every year. In fact, the flat had every convenience in the world.

They also gave him an increase in wages, and in addition he won some money in a government loan lottery. He had a new suit made for himself. He also bought a second-hand divan and a pianola. And so our Comrade Fedor has attained unprecedented social heights.

However, everyone saw that he still went on drinking and fighting. He swore like a trooper, broke branches off the fruit-trees and whipped his young cowherds with them. As for his wife and her respectable mother, as well as their neighbours in the block of flats, he knocked them about so badly at times that they ran in all directions whenever they saw him coming along.

Again he was called before the management.

"It is queer," he said. "Always there's something wrong about my position. I've got nice furniture and a pianola which is always playing. But my wife is a real country fool, and she doesn't fit at all into my new surroundings. She annoys me. I want to marry another girl. And then everything'll be all right for certain."

And so he divided his flat into two parts and began to live with a typist from the works office. But soon they started having rows and fights. He was jealous of her and beat her cruelly, and drove her out into the streets.

Then suddenly everyone understood what was the matter. Everyone understood that he was simply a good-for-nothing worthless fellow.

Everyone saw that he might have needed better living accommodation, but that he also needed to be looked after and re-educated somehow.

And everyone felt very much relieved. They knew now what had to be done with him.

MICHAEL ZOSHCHENKO
(Translated by Elisaveta Fen)

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Peril at End House," at the Vaudeville

This is one of Mrs. Agatha Christie's most intellectual plots, and it is difficult to understand why any theatrical producer should try to dramatise what is essentially a logical process. On the stage the plot is still as sound as a bell, but its dramatic development is only possible by the relentless use of monologue on the part of the unfortunate Poirot. This character (who in Mrs. Christie's books is a mere calculating machine with a Belgian forehead) looms large at the Vaudeville in the person of Mr. Francis Sullivan. By his tremendous range of intonation the audience is deluded into the idea that they are overhearing conversation instead of the ticking of a clockwork mind. But as a thriller the play lacks suspense; there is no unbearably tense instant, no crisis, only the splendidly ingenious dénouement—and ingenuity, however great, is hardly a dramatic virtue.

"We Are Not Alone," at the Warner Theatre

This film, starring Paul Muni and Flora Robson, has many elements which might make it a real disaster. It is adapted by James Hilton from one of his own novels, and is thickly larded with that romantic optimism and would-be-deep moralising ("we are not alone in suffering injustice") which has made him so prosperous. The story moves slowly: a stranded Austrian chorus girl in 1914 is introduced into the household of an English provincial doctor as governess to his fey little boy; his wife's jealousy and the outbreak of the war are combining to drive her away, when the child, by an accident, mixes up his mother's headache pills with some tablets of poison; the doctor and the chorus girl are tried, convicted and finally executed for her murder. The characterisation is done in capital letters; Paul Muni as the doctor is labelled Charm (unconventionality and absent-mindedness); Jane Bryan as the chorus girl is marked Simplicity (innocence and love of children); Flora Robson, the doctor's wife, is Respectability (old-fashioned sternness with children and failure to understand the true nature of Innocence). If you can stomach all that, the film is saved largely by the restraint and deftness of Muni's acting; within the very narrow limits of the author's conception of character, he manages almost to convince us of the reality of the doctor. Flora Robson is too tightly strapped in her type ever to escape from it, but Jane Bryan is really charming. The little boy, Raymond Severn, is likely to be seen a great deal more; he has talent. *We Are Not Alone* is not everybody's cup of tea; those who can take it will find themselves faced with an unhappy ending. After Paul Muni has skilfully manoeuvred the shoals of his last hours before execution, the maid (Una O'Connor) and the little boy bring off a touching finish very movingly.

THE COMING WEEK

MONDAY, May 13th—
Conference on Pacifists and the Labour Party, Labour Hall, Lincoln Avenue, Bournemouth, 3.
"The Man Who Knew Too Much," Everyman Cinema reopening.
"'Tis Pity She's a Whore," Arts Theatre, Cambridge.

TUESDAY, May 14th—
Sir Frederick Keeble: "Development of the Home Production of Food," Royal Institution, 5.15.
"Four Came to Supper," Playhouse.
"Les Parents Terribles," Gate.

WEDNESDAY, May 15th—
Prof. H. J. Laski: "The Idea of an Economic General Staff," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, W.C.1, 5.
E. D. Gannon: "France at War," National Portrait Gallery, 5.30.
"Jupiter Laughs," Lyric.

THURSDAY, May 16th—
Tom Wintringham: "The Spreading War," 2 Keats Grove, 7.45.

FRIDAY, May 17th—
H. R. G. Greaves: "The Structure and Organisation of the New Ministries," Canterbury Hall, 5.

Correspondence

PROPAGANDA AND TREACHERY

SIR,—No one seems to have drawn attention to what appears to me the outstanding moral to be drawn from the Norwegian failure.

It is clear that the blame for this failure canno be laid on the Army, the Navy, or the Air Force, nor, going back further, on the Diplomatic Service, who are restricted to diplomatic channels.

Surely the responsibility lies in the field of Propaganda, or rather, in this case counter-propaganda.

We have grown accustomed to seeing the Quislings referred to as traitors, but this is clearly a misnomer. There could not possibly be so many "traitors" in a country. The Quislings are simply partisans who have favoured the opposite side, either out of political conviction or because they have been convinced that it was in Norway's interests for her to lean to that side.

Only by countering the extension of this point of view among large sections of the Norwegian population could it have been possible to prevent Hitler's Norwegian expedition being the success that it was. The only means of prevention lay with counter-propaganda strong enough to influence at least that section of the Quisling party who had been persuaded that Norway's safety lay in siding with Germany.

It may well be said that the process should have started long before the war, and before the Ministry of Information was in existence. It may not be safe, for this reason, to regard the failure as one attaching to that Ministry. But at least let us see clearly, and though there may not be any element of blame attaching to that Ministry let it learn its lesson for the future; and let the Government come to a belated understanding that propaganda is such a powerful instrument that a whole campaign can be won by it without the military forces having a chance to intervene. J. W. HOBSON

The London Press Exchange,
110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

THE BASIC RATION

SIR,—I am surprised that, while you have published many letters about the Keynes Plan, no letters have followed your article on Sir John Orr's proposals for feeding the people in wartime. Most of us regard economics with combined awe and suspicion, but we all know enough about food to appreciate what Orr's basic ration would mean.

Orr makes the excellent recommendation: that the price of a basic ration, the nature and amount of which he indicates, should be kept by subsidies within the purchasing power of the poorest family. This basic ration is all right as far as it goes; but it is made up of only seven foodstuffs, milk, potatoes, bread (or flour), vegetables, oatmeal, butter (or margarine) and sugar. It supplies only about three-quarters of the calories needed per head and a very small amount of animal protein. To bring the supply of animal protein up to the level which is generally recommended, it would be necessary to buy such foods as meat, cheese or eggs. Orr proposes that the amount of these foods should be limited by reduction of imports; that they should not be subsidised, but that their prices should be allowed to find their economic level. He disapproves of a system of rationing, which might reduce the demand to the amount available. The result of this policy would be an increase of price. This would put these foods entirely outside the purchasing power of the poorest sections, whose diet is now just about adequate. The present inequality of distribution of food would be made worse. The high prices would stimulate the production of these foods at home and limit the production of those foods which Orr wants to see produced here in larger quantities.

If the amount of food available is limited, the essential is to bring the cost of the whole of an adequate diet within the means of the poorest. As Orr says, rationing by itself is not enough. But, at the same time, some system of rationing foods, of which the supply is limited, must be enforced. Otherwise these foods will be bought up by those who can afford to pay excessive prices, while those who are compelled to subsist on Orr's basic ration will be unable to supplement this incomplete diet with the necessary animal protein.

18 Warwick Road, J. R. MARRACK
Bishop's Stortford.

THE NEW FRENCH DECREE

SIR,—Your correspondents of the 4th May protest against the new French decree on the ground that it "makes the propagation of Communist and 'defeatest' opinions an offence punishable by death." But the actual text (*Journal Officiel*, April 10th), which renders liable to the death penalty "any Frenchman having knowingly participated in an organisation for the demoralisation of the army and the nation having as its purpose the weakening of national defence," makes it clear that the decree is directed against participation in organised activities and not against the propagation of private opinions.

The *rapport* presented by the Ministers to the President in recommending the decree, which it accompanies in the *Journal Officiel*, states:

> In order to avoid any uncertainty in its application and any apprehension regarding the scope of the Decree in practice, care has been taken in drawing it up to point out that the prosecution must establish the existence of the following three constitutive elements:
>
> 1. The existence of an organisation aiming at the demoralisation of the army and the nation, that is to say, the existence of a more or less secret organisation pursuing a concerted effort and having a clearly defined aim. Occasional acts on the part of isolated individuals would, therefore, not be considered a ground for instituting proceedings under Article 76 (3d).
>
> 2. The aim of the organisation must be the weakening of national defence and of the capacity of resistance of the nation in face of an aggressor by the undermining of the morale of the army and the civilian population. Criticisms and expressions of opinion which have not this aim do not, therefore, come under this Decree.
>
> 3. There must be conscious and deliberate participation in the organising and carrying out of the criminal activities. Those who have been guilty of occasional and unintentional complicity in such activities do not come under the provisions of the new Article.
>
> These conditions remove any reason for apprehension on the ground that the Decree may be applied on a scale going beyond the intentions of those who framed it. Moreover, the Government intends to be vigilant in insisting that proceedings under this Decree shall remain within the framework thus defined.

King's College, R. B. BRAITHWAITE
Cambridge.

ANGLO-SOVIET TALKS

SIR,—Can any good come from our calamitous defeat in Norway? Only if it exposes not merely the incompetence of our present leadership but also the disastrous character of our governing class mentality, which threatens to lose us the war as it lost us the peace.

The key point to-day as a year ago is in our relations to the Soviet Union. A year ago we could have stopped Hitler and prevented war by signing the pact with Russia. Our hatred of the Soviets led us to prefer war. Six months ago we could have prevented the Finnish war by advising Finland to accept, like the other Baltic States, those minimum terms the Soviet Union considered imperative for its safety. Again, out of hatred, we preferred war, with disastrous consequences for the Finnish people. When by mediation we could have saved lives and gained better terms, we refused, even attempting, as Finland signed the peace terms, to persuade it to continue fighting. Six weeks ago the latest, and I fear the last, opportunity for more friendly relations with the Soviet Union was presented to us, when Moscow proposed a new trade agreement. Instead of gladly accepting we are deliberately sabotaging this opportunity, using the same insultingly foolish methods that we did a year ago—treating Russia as a third-rate power and proposing terms we did not dare or care to impose on Italy or Denmark or Holland. In our blind malevolence, unless our policy is reversed, we shall wreck this latest, and perhaps last, opportunity for friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Who can doubt the importance of Russian friendship? To-day, as Sweden and Jugoslavia have suddenly discovered, the Soviet Union holds the balance of power. It is determined to remain neutral. We have the opportunity to ensure that that neutrality shall operate not less favourably to us than to Germany. With Scandinavia gone, and Italy on the brink of war, Russia's attitude is as determining a factor now as it was last year. It will grow as the war develops. The most elementary counsels dictate acceptance of the Soviet offer.

I have the best reason for saying that Russia is sincere in her desire for friendship. But her patience is not inexhaustible. She is in no mood to suffer further insults gladly. Nor need she to-day. For us, the need was never more urgent than now to repair the errors of the past. Four things are essential. A radical reorientation of our policy to Russia. The signing of a trade agreement. The sending of a new minister sympathetic to, and understanding of, the new Soviet regime to Moscow. A change in attitude, and therefore in personnel, of the Moscow Embassy and its corresponding branch in the Foreign Office.

These things are imperative. We ignore them at our peril. The price for our hatred of the Soviet a year ago was war. To-day it may mean the loss of that war. HEWLETT JOHNSON

Deanery, Canterbury.

CENSORSHIP

SIR,—Those who were on the Western Front in the last Great War may remember how a "furore" was raised in the House of Commons, in 1918, when an M.P. drew attention to the fact that a gallant major, newly appointed as press censor in France, had deleted one word from a newspaper correspondent's story. That word occurs in a famous line of Kipling's Recessional Hymn of which the same gallant major—probably such a rare old public school man—had never heard:

> The captains and the . . . depart.

The major seems to have his spiritual successor in the present censorship in the B.E.F. in France—not of press messages, but of *private* soldiers' letters. This last week-end I have seen an official warning from high military authority in France to a woman whose husband is serving as a private in a certain county regiment on the Western Front:

> If you again *put crosses* at the foot of your letters to your husband, he will not be allowed to receive your letters, which will be returned to you.

Perhaps somebody in the military censorship has been reading spy thrillers and suspects that the *crosses* are a code. May be he is so innocent that he has never heard why women and girls put crosses at the foot of their letters to their husbands and sweethearts. If spy fever has seized on the censoring military gentlemen will their superiors please note that their activities would be far more profitably directed to the opening of letters whose envelopes have been signed by the *officer* writers? Those letters are being passed *unopened*, and as an officer, in view of his mess contacts, and occasional meetings with brass hats of the Staff, has opportunities for indiscretions such as a mere private soldier entirely lacks, it is a jackass policy to open one and not the others. HAROLD T. WILKINS

WAR SOCIALISM

SIR,—I hope Mr. Lyness is mistaken when he suggests that my last letter is likely to produce confusion: from his reply, however, it would certainly appear, either that I failed to express clearly the ideas which I wished to put forward, or that, in his opinion, they are of no consequence.

Mr. Lyness continues to discuss a question which, I tried to show, leads, by the very terms in which it is couched, to a barren conclusion. Admittedly the topic is relevant to the conditions of the economic order from which we now suffer, and all that Mr. Lyness says about it may be perfectly true. The point of my letter was that the question itself implies that the capitalist system of production is the only one possible: or the only one under which it is possible to carry on the war. It also implies a belief, probably erroneous, that, in the old orthodox sense of the words, somebody *can* pay for the war. It is more than possible that the underlying problem of increased production cannot be solved within our present economic system.

Under a Socialist economy, however, it would be possible greatly to increase production of all kinds, and the problem of payment, by taxation or savings, need not arise at all. This I tried to suggest in my last letter, and I was happy to find the same thoughts expressed beyond any possibility of confusion in your article "Labour and the Cabinet."

In order to win we shall have to destroy the things Mr. Chamberlain holds most dear . . . the social structure beloved by elder statesmen was as well-adapted for peace as it is now proving for

war . . . if we are fighting to preserve democracy we must be prepared for revolutionary changes. The task of the democrat is not to defend liberty and social privilege against planning, but to reconcile liberty with the planning and to uproot the privileges which weaken our war-effort.

Torquay. J. B.

THE BRITISH IN YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—As I am the only man who has recently lectured on British art in Yugoslavia I presume I am referred to in the letter quoted by Critic in last week's issue as "a man well qualified to talk on Municipal Housing was sent here to lecture on British art." I am inclined to agree that Housing would have been a better subject but I must point out that the various English clubs—I lectured in fourteen towns—have very varying ideas on this sort of thing. It is not so simple. My inquiries as to what would be a good subject produced an astonishing variety of answers, but there were many who considered British art excellent because it conveyed a reassuring feeling of our calm pursuit of cultural interests—the extreme counterblast to the excitable German concentration on the moment. Mental stability against clamorous anxiety.

I must also protest against Critic's correspondent's implication that British Council teachers are not "first-rate, keen, young and well-orientated." I was most impressed with the excellent work which is being done in certain cases by young men alone in small towns sometimes unpleasantly close to the frontiers. I would far rather settle in the Maginot Line than in two towns I visited where such young men were carrying on their work. The criticism is far too sweeping.

I have no connection with the British Council other than having undertaken this tour for them and I certainly do not wish to give the impression that all is being done that should be done in Yugoslavia. I agree with much of what Critic's correspondent writes and I could add "a packet." But it is certainly not all the British Council's fault.

Manor House, ANTHONY BERTRAM
Bignor Pulborough, Sussex.

DAILY WORKER

SIR,—May I point out one step in the reasoning of current Communist anti-war dialectics which bewilders an outsider? Mr. Rust writes "Chamberlain is the nearest enemy, so let's have at him!" or words to that effect. But why? The Communist who saw which side his bread was buttered (and for the British Communist this is no dead metaphor) would realise—witness Mr. Robert Dell in neighbouring column—that it is overwhelmingly to his advantage to keep Mr. Chamberlain where he is. Mr. Chamberlain who, wise but never in time, has only to miss one more bus, the last, to make the world forever safe for Communazidom

The Pond House, GEORGE RICHARDS
Stoke Row,
Nr. Henley-on-Thames.

WHICH WAR?

SIR,—You misunderstand me. Hitler *may* win this war; he won't win the war with his workers which will follow it. But if the Communists go round bawling in the Chamberlain-Sinclair-Attlee hymn of hate choir, they'll make it all the harder for our workers to win *their* war.

2 New Square, F. H. C. SHREWSBURY
Cambridge.

THE U.L.F.

SIR,—We trust that you will find space in your columns to publish this letter, since anyone reading the comment of Critic in your last issue might gain the impression that in spite of the great influence of the U.L.F. in the Universities, it is merely an organisation of 4,000 stooges dominated by a few "energetic young men and women" at the top. The resolution against the war, which is the main reason for our expulsion from the Party, was only passed by the executive after many of our sections had voted against the war. It was carried at our annual conference, a delegate conference, by 49–9, after it had been carried in every one of our sections, and after a term's full discussion, in the local sections and in our Weekly Bulletin, which we opened to free discussion on the Socialist attitude to the war. This compares very favourably with the position in the Party as a whole; for the National Executive adopted a policy without any consultation of the membership, without any effort to stimulate discussion in the local sections, and without allowing free debate in the pages of the *Herald*, and is now disaffiliating sections *before* the Conference, so that they are not able to oppose the policy of the Executive at the annual Party Conference. More than that, it is now admitted that the Party leadership is discussing with the Government the best methods of combatting anti-war propaganda; that is, in fact, conspiring with the representatives of big business against sections of the Labour Movement.

In addition to expressing disapproval of the resolutions passed at our Conference, the letter we received from the Party informs us that the work of the U.L.F. in the past two years "has been a complete failure from the Labour Party point of view." This is in spite of the fact that we have received in the course of that period letters from Mr. Attlee and Mr. Morrison thanking us for the work that we have done for the Labour Movement. Our members have assisted in strikes and in elections, and many of them have worked in responsible positions in the Party, or, like John Cornford, have fought with the International Brigade in Spain. Perhaps even more important, we have played an important part in changing the whole attitude of the Universities to the working class movement. In 1926 students acted as blacklegs in the General Strike. In 1940, at the most representative student congress ever held, a resolution was carried (none against, 2 abstentions) urging, *inter alia*, "co-operation between the National Union of Students and other student organisations, and Co-operative, religious, Trade Union and other national organisations for the defence and development of the Universities."

Though the resolutions passed at the British Student Congress do not in any way bind any of the organisations sponsoring the Congress, and were voted in an individual capacity and not as delegates, they give an indication of the way students are thinking at the moment. Private property as the mainspring of production was condemned by 416 to 9; resolutions demanding Socialism as an essential of any new world order; independence for India, and democratic liberties in France were all carried by overwhelming majorities. One can see from the recent debate in Parliament that the leaders of the Party are not interested in independence for India; from the pages of the *Herald* that they support Fascist measures in France; from Labour War Aims that Socialism is not the important thing for them at the moment. We believe, however, that the rank and file of the movement will consider that we have done good work in winning students for these aims.

L. S. SCHULZ, Chairman
University Labour Federation,
58 Theobald's Road, W.C.1.

OUR NOBLE ARMY

SIR,—In my letter you printed on April 27th, I had no desire to convey the impression that the services of our hospital matrons should be utilised to administer the women's war organisations. I only wished to draw some comparison between the qualifications of these highly efficient women and those of the society, or "county," women who control the W.A.T.S., and whose salaries and other emoluments equal, and, most probably, exceed those of the matrons of our largest training hospitals.

The 75 chief and senior commandants with little or no real administrative or business experience—some V.A.D. work or motor driving in the last war cannot possibly be accepted as administrative experience—must be receiving State salaries and ration and lodging allowances at the rate of some £700 a week, possibly more. There are also other very useful allowances which cannot be estimated in bulk.

Altogether the W.A.T.S. must be costing the State over one million pounds sterling a year for the performance of simple duties, which, with the introduction of some common-sense administration and the elimination of the burlesque, or musical comedy side, could be efficiently performed for considerably less expenditure.

And so with the other women's organisations.

It is difficult to compare rates of pay and allowances of the W.A.T.S. with those of the W.R.A.F. and W.A.A.F. There are extraordinary differences of remuneration for the performance of practically the same type of work, and especially in the superior ranks.

The female personnel of the N.A.A.F.I., whose

TURKISH
CIGARETTES
*
Abdulla
the best
at any price
*
10 for 8½d
and upwards

duties are fairly comparable with those of their more spectacular sisters in uniform, do not require brass-bound military kit; military drill and ceremonial; buglers and sentries; military discipline and a multitude of expensive society women to patronise, inspect and generally "organise" their work and every movement. It is very doubtful if the pay of this hard-working body of women approaches the pay, value of clothing and underclothing—from the skin outwards—and other financial advantages of their opposite numbers in the women's organisations. To attempt any comparison with those stout-hearted women and girls who are performing the hardest of all work on the land, and working much longer hours, without the aid of a musical comedy setting, for 28*s*. a week out of which board and lodgings, underclothing and ordinary clothing have to be found (only the minimum of working gear is provided), and no canteen price privileges for anything, would be the height of absurdity, and bordering upon insult.

It seems reasonable to suggest that great economies could be effected by the pooling of all women labour, whether for naval, army or air force use, under one capable administration—not necessarily entirely female—and the introduction of flat rates of pay throughout for comparable work.

The only factor which matters is value for money expended on any national service and it appears clear enough that the nation is not receiving this value in so far as the women's organisations are concerned. CHARLES SPELLER

3 Fairwater Terrace,
Taunton

LAND SOCIETY AND LEGAL REFORM

SIR,—The Law Society are introducing into Parliament the Solicitors Bill, 1940, dealing mainly with remedies for defalcations amongst solicitors. The bill also deals with other matters with regard to which the Law Society wish to make legislation. But the whole tone of the bill seems to leave the council of the Society in complete mastery of their affairs. Having regard to the fact that the council of the Society is composed of practising solicitors it means that they are biased in favour of the members of their profession, who are often their practising colleagues, and prejudiced against the public their client. Solicitors are essentially officers of the court and provision should be made in the Bill for the court to intervene more in the various matters that come before the Society and their committees. Provision should be made for direct appeals to the court in all matters that are dealt with by the various committees of the Society. The Bill gives to the council of the Society the power of the bureaucrat.

London, E.C.4. M. MARSHALL
May 3rd, 1940.

THE ARAB QUESTION

SIR,—While few people would oppose the central ideas underlying the conception of an Arab confederation of States, still fewer of those who have studied the facts could seriously consider such a confederation, as envisaged by your Arab nationalist correspondent, capable of realisation at any time but the very remote future. Arab unity, whatever meaning may be attached to this term, does not and will not become a reality merely by the manipulation and repetition of political formulae such as federation, sub-federations, etc. It must have its roots in firmer ground, and that ground is economics. Substantial economic advancement in the Arab countries is the essential pre-requisite for any genuine political adhesion between them. The statement that in the vast area comprising the "Arab world" the "community of sentiments which animate the seventy million Arabs is strong enough to weld it together," is manifestly absurd. One might well inquire as to the position in Syria itself, not only because it was specifically mentioned in the article, but by virtue of it being the birthplace and stronghold of the Arab national movement.

All the minorities—Lebanese, Alawite and Druse—have adopted an attitude of open defiance against the Damascus nationalists. All of them base their separatist aspirations on a policy of friendship and accommodation to French interests. In Gezira the officials from Damascus were last year being held as virtual hostages by the local population. And in Jebel Druse the anti-Arab and pro-French section has been led by Sultan al-Atrash and his family, the heroes of the 1926 rebellion. Thus the Syrian Arab nationalists have authority only within the area of Damascus, Homs and Hama. The Syrian minorities have ample reason to distrust the mood of the dominant Arab nationalist party. The massacre of the Syrians in Iraq and the terroristic assaults on the Jewish national home in Palestine are a fair warrant of what Arab nationalist control would mean for dissident groups.

In fact, the "community of sentiments" among the three and a half million inhabitants of Syria that are alleged to be a welding force, are extremely difficult to discover, and Syria represents the most signal failure of Arab nationalism. And if it is true, as your correspondent suggests, that essential economic reconstruction cannot be undertaken while the Arabs are divided, then the Arab masses are indeed in for a fearful time. But, of course, the statement is far from being correct. The Iraq Government need not wait for the Arab political millennium before taking action to alleviate the sufferings of its peasantry. And in Syria much can be done by the Arabs themselves for the benefit of its agricultural population (over 62 per cent. of the total population) by attempting to remove all the links in the crippling chain of poverty and stagnation which hampers the Syrian agriculturalist: the concentration of large areas of land in the hands of big Arab landowners, the ruthless exploitation of the tenantry, the fellah's burden of debt to Arab usurers, the unjust division of taxation, the continued existence of the musha's system of land tenure (perhaps the most idiotic system that has survived into this generation), to mention but a few. Reforms so vital and urgent do not first demand the withdrawal of the French, or federation with Palestine or Transjordan, although it is certainly true that Palestine with the Jewish national home is of great importance to the Syrian economy generally.

As an Arab nationalist your correspondent is naturally concerned with the problem of Palestine. Here he thinks that the world should be invited to agree that the Jews remain a minority permanently.

The notion that the Jewish people should be asked and expected to give up its right to a bare national existence can be described either as vicious or ludicrous, depending on how one feels about the matter. It is the Jews and not the Arabs whose prospect of self-determination is at stake. It is the freedom and national culture of the Jews, not of the Arabs, which faces life or death according to the manner in which the Palestine problem is solved.

Lebensraum is an issue in this war as you have previously pointed out. Then the Jews need not be afraid when the time comes to demand that tiny corner of the world, which only has any meaning in the history of civilisation by virtue of the Jews' uninterrupted attachment to it. Although an Arab federation may, as yet, not be practical politics, a discussion of it is always useful in that it reminds us how beneficial it is to discuss the Palestine problem in the light of the present position of the Arab and Jewish peoples, from this wider point of vantage, and not that of the parish pump of the Palestine Arab politician. It is no doubt a good thing that men like Jamaal Husseini should have a despatch case and Cabinet rank. But it is not such a paramount good that it justifies the Jews renouncing their claim to equal status with other national groups or sacrificing the aims which the Arabs regard as so reasonable when professed by themselves. D. HUME-ROTHERY

THE SIX POINT GROUP

SIR,—May I, on behalf of the Six Point Group, ask for a little precious space in your necessarily curtailed columns, to voice a very real grievance in the position of women Civil Servants?

In response to a Treasury circular last year, many married women laid down their jobs, often under very hard conditions. Now, with the war-shortage of male labour, the marriage bar has been temporarily suspended. So far so good. But what are we to think of a Government which demands that these women be reinstated *not* at the rate of pay to which their service entitled them, when they were obliged to resign, *but at the salaries of newly recruited temporary officers*, although they are called upon to do precisely the same work as before? This drop amounts in many cases to £150 p.a.

In most professions, those returning after an interval, resume work at the scale they had reached before cessation. Is this petty economy justifiable?

It is difficult to believe in the bona-fides of a Government that adopts this attitude to its citizens. Cap-in-hand, Mr. Churchill and his colleagues ask for women's help in the nation's war effort. Sir Henry Page-Croft, in Parliament a fortnight ago, said: "Although I am an admirer of the Fair Sex, when are we to hear a little less squeaking from the wife without children about the allowance paid to her, when there are thousands of jobs outside at 10*s*. a week and upwards to supplement her allowance?" Some of us remember women's work during the last war.

Is this the way to get co-operation from those who provide the living material for man's wars?

35 Brookfield, PHYLLIS VALLANCE
West Hill, N.6.

THE EMPIRE

SIR,—We British are widely regarded as humbugs by other nations, because after annexing an enormous Empire by the sword, we now condemn military imperialism as an anachronism. We can easily cleanse ourselves from such suspicions if amongst our war aims we pledge ourselves to join other nations in putting our colonies at the disposal of an international pool. It might be a condition of such pooling that the pooled colonies should remain unfortified, and should not be the subjects of tariffs or trading preferences. The term "colony" would need careful definition, of course, and would certainly exclude all British-speaking and self-governing Dominions. It has been authoritatively claimed that certain colonies administered under mandate from the League of Nations have been better administered than those under national controls.

We cannot wonder that other nations sneer at our condemnation of military imperialism so long as we retain the profits of our past adventures in that sphere. B. H. DAVIES

Bexhill-on-Sea.

12½ PER CENT.

SIR,—May I draw your attention to the company report of Van den Bergh's and Jurgen's, Limited, published in the *Times* on May 1st? This margarine company, which has put up its price a penny a pound since war began, declares a dividend of 12½ per cent., free of tax.

The report says: "It is appreciated that the amount of this Ordinary dividend is higher than the amounts distributed in the pre-war years, but the Board feel that this is not contrary to the spirit of the arrangements now under consideration in Parliament as the Budget was introduced after the proposal to pay this dividend had been circulated to all shareholders and published in the press."

Sir John Simon told us this was to be a three-per-cent. war. I applauded because it is sound doctrine that land, properly administered, can never pay more than 3 per cent., and equally sound doctrine that land should be the basis for all financial and economic calculations. My faith was somewhat shaken when Sir John Simon announced the curtailment of dividends to 6 per cent. Six is not three. The report of Van den Bergh's and Jurgen's, Limited, makes me despair. SYBIL BOLTON

3 Strand-on-the-Green,
Chiswick, W.4.

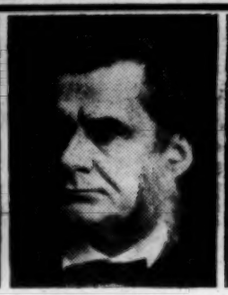
MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL AND HER ROLES

SIR,—Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's article in your issue of May 4th is the only one of those I have seen on Mrs. Patrick Campbell which mentions *For the Crown*. But I was sorry to see that he described it as "a play in stilted verse." When I fought my way to the gallery at the Lyceum (they did not queue up for the Gods in those days), I had no idea that it was a blank verse play, and I remember the thrill I had on hearing the lines as spoken by Forbes Robertson and Mrs. Patrick Campbell. I have never seen the thing in print, but when I heard it I thought it magnificent. It was "done into English verse" by poor John Davidson, who, though he had a great reputation as a poet and man of letters, drowned himself because he couldn't earn enough to live upon. A. MORGAN YOUNG

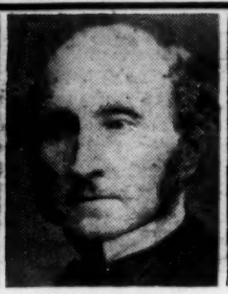
Oxford.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE
Founded The Fortnightly in 1865

JOHN MORLEY
Edited The Fortnightly 1867-1883.



THOMAS HUXLEY
A frequent contributor in the early days.



JOHN STUART MILL
A regular contributor under Morley.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
Wrote many articles for The Fortnightly in his Radical days.

MATTHEW ARNOLD
A regular contributor.

The FORTNIGHTLY

75th Year of Publication

WITH its issue of May, 1940, *THE FORTNIGHTLY* reaches its seventy-fifth birthday.

A memorable list of contributors has been secured for this birthday year. Outstanding contributions in the May and June issues include the following:—

1 **THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** contributes an outspoken and extremely courageous article. "So long as we rely on the Profit-motive" says Dr. Temple, "so long we shall be in a condition always verging towards faction within and war without." "The one thing that has become international in our world is Finance; it is arguable that it ought to have been the last." The statement contains far-reaching implications which merit close study and are likely to lead to much controversy.

2 **H. G. WELLS** fires a powerful broadside at his critics. Mr. Wells in a new and formidable mood. The article is notable for its extreme vigour and plain speaking. Mr. Wells has severe criticism to make of Dr. Inge and Mr. Arthur Bryant. "I refuse to charge either of these gentlemen with deliberate falsehood. But I can do so only on the assumption that they are so mentally deranged by their horror of expropriation as the ultimate evil, that they are indifferent to the ordinary rules of evidence."

THE MARQUESS OF CREWE, K.G.

H. G. WELLS

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

3 **GEORGE LANSBURY.** THE FORTNIGHTLY will publish in June the last article written by Mr. Lansbury before his death. The article, and the letter which accompanied the MS, reveal in extraordinary degree the indomitable courage and sincerity of the man. "There are many things for which I hope I would be willing to give my life or lose it." "Honestly I have tried to live as a Christian but have often, very often, failed—defects of character and temper account for much failure. But over-riding everything else is the simple fact I have had to earn the means of life for myself and family within a society based on competitive struggle, a society which worships personal success whether in politics, business or religion."

4 **THE MARQUESS OF CREWE, K.G.** discusses, in a deeply interesting article, the possibility of re-establishing the Liberal Party as a potent political force in the country.

THE prospectus of *THE FORTNIGHTLY* appeared in the spring of 1865. The review would offer an arena for the free discussion of burning questions, political, religious, social, literary. In 1867 John Morley became editor. Henceforth, to quote the words of Mr. Arthur Waugh in his history of *THE FORTNIGHTLY*, "the review was pledged to a certain uniformity of attack against the ignorance and complacency of the British middle-class. Huxley, Harrison, Bagehot, John Stuart Mill, and John Morley himself were all valiant champions in the cause of free thought, and self-satisfied orthodoxy was attacked upon every field." Later *THE FORTNIGHTLY* list of contributors was strengthened by a brilliant group of names—Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, Edward Dowden, Henry James, Edmund Gosse, Thomas Hardy, Andrew Lang, Leslie Stephen, James Frazer, George Saintesbury—the critical garden of the century in full flower—followed by Galsworthy, Pirandello, D. H. Lawrence, G. K. Chesterton and André Maurois. To-day *THE FORTNIGHTLY* still maintains its position in the forefront of reviews with a list of contributors which shows no diminution on the splendours of the past.

★ *Recent or forthcoming contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY also include:—*

LORD ADDISON, LORD HORDER, A. A. MILNE, Dr. NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER, HILAIRE BELLOC, WICKHAM STEED, H. A. L. FISHER, DOROTHY L. SAYERS, Dr. W. R. INGE, LORD DAVID CECIL, PETER DRUCKER, SIR CHARLES TREVELYAN, PERTINAX, VISCOUNT CRANBORNE, Prof. DENIS SAURAT, T. S. ELIOT, the DUCHESS OF ATHOLL, LORD DUNSANY, OSBERT SITWELL, LORD PONSONBY, H. W. NEVINSON, ST. JOHN ERVINE, Dr. JOHAN HUIZINGA, etc.

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Current Literature

A WELCOME CORRECTIVE

Is France Still a Democracy? By D. M. W. P. *Fabian Society.* 1s.

The Fabian Society's latest pamphlet should be read by everyone interested in politics and especially by those Liberals and Socialists who have permitted a very proper interest in the defence of French liberties to lead them to such ridiculous assertions as that France is now a totalitarian State. It is indeed noteworthy that many of the noisiest critics of France, apart from the Communists, are fellow-travellers, who in the past have urged us to judge the U.S.S.R. not by British standards, but in the light of Russian conditions. They have not shown the same tenderness in dealing with France. With a slightly unpleasant mixture of insularity and patronising sympathy they have resolutely measured the conduct of French democracy in wartime by the standards of a Britain which in French opinion has hardly started to grapple with the problem of fighting the war. Though it is probably not intended to do so, such criticism can have only one result, the intensification of that discord between the two Western democracies which was largely responsible for the failure of the Peace Treaty and the coming of the present war.

The Fabian Society has had the courage to provide the proper corrective to those critics. *Is France Still a Democracy?* does not attempt to hide the weakness of the French parliamentary system, nor to conceal the serious mistakes which the French Government has made: moreover, it hints discreetly at the class bias and the treachery which inspires certain sections of the French Right, and gives to the French Communists a sympathy they would not otherwise enjoy. But, admitting all this, it reminds us first of all of the profound differences between the French conception of democracy and our own, and very properly suggests that in many respects, even in wartime, France is much more democratic than we are. The critics of France clamour for equality of sacrifice, but omit to observe the grotesque inequality of sacrifice which permits the British soldier and the British soldier's wife to suffer, while the British worker safe at home demands higher wages. Such things, at least, are not tolerated in France, any more than a class system of education or a class army. French democracy is based on social equality and the will of the majority, and has always been prepared to sacrifice civil liberties in order to achieve these two objectives. Again, ignorant critics, brought up to the British Cabinet system, have failed to observe that government by decree was accepted by *all* parties in France as an emergency measure long before this war and is rendered inevitable by the chronic weakness of the executive in the French system. French democracy vacillates between the determination to prevent any government doing anything when times are easy, and the determination to prevent any weakening of the national will when times are hard. We may not want this type of government for ourselves, but a Frenchman could at least observe that his country would never have tolerated the Chamberlain Cabinet for so long. There are disadvantages in Cabinet stability based upon deadening party machines, as we are beginning to realise to-day. The authors do not deny that the powers obtained by Daladier are dangerously great, but they argue convincingly that the Chamber and the Senate have increased and not decreased their powers during the course of the war. There are no signs of the French Premier becoming an autocratic dictator. If English critics wanted evidence of French parliamentary vigour they might study the famous debate of November 30th, or even the end of M. Daladier's last Cabinet.

Turning to the position of the Trade Unions and the persecution of the Communists, the authors point out firstly that the Communist danger was so great as to render drastic measures inevitable, and, secondly, that drastic measures were demanded not only by reactionaries but also by the Socialists and the great majority of the Trade Unionists. The miners, the metal workers and the transport workers, for instance, are all anti-Communist, and the numbers in the Unions dissolved were relatively small. Nor is it fair to say that social legislation during the war has been wholly reactionary. We are still demanding price-fixing in this country: it has been achieved in France and a really large-scale plan of family allowances has done much to relieve distress. No one denies that there are reactionary tendencies, but they are being fought valiantly by the Trade Unions and the parliamentary Left. Any government which had not hit the Communists hard would have been swept away by popular indignation: that French democracy uses singularly unpleasant police methods in dealing with its enemies must be admitted, but this proves not that France has gone totalitarian, but that French democracy remains true to type.

A final section deals with the refugee problem and reminds the British critic of the tiny contribution Britain made compared to France. What are our 74,000 refugees compared to the half-a-million Spaniards, to take only one section, who crossed into France? The British method was to leave the refugees free and sort them out slowly; the French to lock up all possible suspects and sort them out in the camps. The difference was partly due to a difference of temperament, partly to a difference in the scale of the problems in France and Britain; it had nothing to do with the issue of democracy versus totalitarianism. Advantages on our side were largely derived from the far greater elasticity of our civil service; French bureaucracy is over-centralised and over-officious, like that of all Continental countries.

I cannot recommend this pamphlet too warmly. France is at war while we are still lazily stretching our arms before getting to work. France is faced with social problems infinitely greater than our own: her people are extremely level-headed and willing to hear criticism which is even tolerably well-informed. I only wish that some of our English governesses would take a few lessons in democracy from the Frenchmen they so easily condemn and apply them here in England.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

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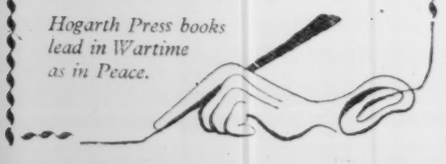

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The Sober War. By GEORGE ROSTREVOR HAMILTON. *Heinemann.* 3s. 6d.

The Last Ditch. By LOUIS MACNEICE. *Cuala Press, Dublin.* 12s. 6d.

In Time of Suspense. By LAURENCE WHISTLER. *Heinemann.* 5s.

Letter from Ireland. By EWART MILNE. *Gayfield Press, Dublin.* 5s.

The Man Coming Toward You. By OSCAR WILLIAMS. *Oxford Press, New York.* 2 *dollars.*

The Gap of Brightness. By F. R. HIGGINS. *Macmillan.* 5s.

The New Apocalypse. *Fortune Press.* 5s.

Poems. By ROY FULLER.

38 Poems. By HENRY TREECE. *Fortune Press.* 4s. 6d. each.

Poetry is a means by which poets communicate their own states of mind to others. They do this not by a process of logical argument, but by using simultaneously a number of devices—rhythm, imagery, music, association, etc.—which will carry across the poem to the reader's mind.

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Luckily, manner is so important that we can get a great deal of pleasure out of poets who have little to say, but who say it successfully. Three of the poets whom I am reviewing in this long list—Mr. Hamilton, Mr. MacNeice, and Mr. Whistler—show by the titles of their books that they wish to communicate something about the war. None of them, in fact, has anything of the slightest interest to say about it. Or, to be perfectly fair, Mr. Hamilton, emerging cautiously from the mood of Robert Bridges' by now somewhat dilapidated 1914-model Rock Garden, austerely echoes the sentiments of *Times* leaders in the tones of a Muse sober on Ginger Ale. There are some fine specimens of a mood rather too common to the Great Tradition of British Poetry, that of the dignified School Master, disturbed in his study by the cheeky little foreign schoolboy, Napoleon in the old days (vide Browning, Wordsworth, etc.), Hitler to-day. With tattered ends of gown flapping, the poet whips round, folds his arms, and recites:

> So—you supplant us, and you think to scorn
> Our stature. You mistake us; we are great.
> The seasoned proof of kingship we have worn;
> 'Tis for no barren past we bow to fate.

Luckily Mr. Hamilton is not always on such a high horse as this, and there are some pleasant lines of nature poetry here and there scattered through the pages of Dignity confronted with Impudence.

All Mr. MacNeice has to say about the war is that it prevents him going to bed with someone or other. This message from the Irish-American Last Ditch is reiterated in several poems:

> There is someone I should like
> Beside me in this bed
> And God damn Hitler
> That she is not here.

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"Don't miss this book "—*George Orwell* (*Tribune*)

"First choice "—*Times Lit. Supp.*

"A remarkable book, gradually gathering interest "—*Observer*

"Has the power of intense feeling "—*Sir John Squire* (*Ill. London News*)

"At his best he is better than Dreiser or Steinbek "—*Edwin Muir* (*Listener*)

What a bore the war is! Perhaps this utterly lackadaisical foppish attitude is rather sympathetic, but I think it can go too far. This book contains the most facile poems Mr. MacNeice has yet written, in which he is a good deal too free with his pessimism and his "loves" and "darlings" handed out right and left. It is redeemed at the end by *The Old Story is True*, a poem of genuine disillusionment, and *The Gardener*, a crisp, brittle narrative contrasting pleasantly with the lilt of the other poems.

Mr. Whistler's world is one of prosperous artiness—poems beautifully engraved on golden goblets, rare woods, glass, etc. He is an exquisite, mannerful, meticulous artist, and I read his lines with a sneaking appreciation, while disliking their phoney lushness:

> Here in the quiet brilliance of belief
> We fashion life at such intensity,
> The very chairs might rustle into leaf
> And panels grope to build their primal tree.
> Now when our bodies meet like star to star,
> Now when our minds remoter commerce do,

and so on. The last line is atrocious, but Mr. Whistler carries it off by creating the impression that he is "the poet" in a novel by Mr. Charles Morgan. For the rest, his War Message to you is much the same as that of Mr. Hamilton, though, if anything he is more complacent in his assumption that we are fighting for wicker-work of our own. "The quiet brilliance of belief," in an oak-panelled dining room.

Much as I admire Mr. MacNeice's talent at its best, it is only when I come to the next three poets on my list, Ewart Milne, Oscar Williams and F. R. Higgins that I feel a real respect for what is being attempted.

Mr. Milne is not a lay figure, nor a dandy, nor a pasticheur, he is a real personality, very much alive and aware of the problems of his time. He has few literary graces, and, after only two or three readings, I regard his book as a poetic document of our times, rather than as a collection of finished poems; but it is more difficult to write about problems which are true to our situation than to strike the poses of dead literary figures. All the same, he is a serious literary artist, concerned with the problems of writing, as two variations on a theme *Germini* 1 and 2, show. It is impossible to quote free verse except at more length than I have space for here. But I advise readers who want to see a presentation of our time by a mind which is not remote, to read Ewart Milne's book.

Oscar Williams is another writer whose words pour out in a torrent from a world of violence and business and poverty and machinery. He is diffuse and uncontrolled, but all the same we recognise the world that perplexes us, and we feel that the writer is aware of the problems of the machine age. His poetry suffers from the excess of hard visual imagery which spoils much American poetry for an English reader. But he is worth reading.

One is grateful for that modern poetry which attempts to face the immense task of translating industrial civilisation into imaginative and comprehensible terms. Mr. MacNeice evades the problems by offering us instead his attractive personality, Mr. Hamilton is clad in an outworn robe of outraged highmindedness, Mr. Whistler offers us some hand-tooled glass, gold and other junk. These weapons are quite inadequate: Mr. Milne and Mr. Williams get us somewhere because they at least present the problem to us. But they have not created the language of a philosophic poetry which might integrate it.

Mr. F. R. Higgins does not touch any problems, and succeeds in writing excellently on traditional themes. His poetry, like that of Andrew Young, is neglected, perhaps because it does not "fit in" where one might expect. It is neither "Georgian" nor "modern." Mr. Higgins just lives in Ireland and goes ahead writing about the drink and his family and the country and the girls:

> When pails empty the last brightness
> Of the well, at twilight time,
> And you are there among women—
> O mouth of silence,
> Will you come with me, when I sign,
> To the far green wood that fences
> A lake inlaid with light?

With a brilliant technique and verbal gift, Mr. Higgins is a master of this kind of writing and his poetry is extremely enjoyable.

The New Apocalypse starts off with a tremendous pronouncement by J. F. Hendry who modestly links his team with Beethoven, Shakespeare, Da Vinci, Goya, and Van Gogh:

> The writers included in this book have in common the fact that they alone are seeking and finding the optimum living synthesis of man and exterior world; the fusion of man and object in philosophy through the collapse of the subject-object relation . . . fusion of man and art, by bringing art to actual life.

After this, perhaps the writers let one down since they appear to have little in common except a desire to imitate Mr. Dylan Thomas, a poet of individual genius, and particularly inimitable. The Apocalyptic way of imitating him is to write a feeble tentative kind of gibberish:

> Then sing to drown the blast my mind-marshall,
> Or let the echo of an oceanic thunder
> Snap a crab's death-roll upon you in your shell.

This is by J. F. Hendry, though if it were unsigned I might have taken it for a work of that other optimum living synthesiser Mr. Treece, who writes like this:

> Under the whoring eyes of stars, winking
> I waited Death's knock in my heart of ice,
> Hindered the patient worm upon his quest. . . .

Roy Fuller has a sensitive, delicate and genuine gift which should mature and deserves encouragement.

STEPHEN SPENDER

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GEORGE III AND BUTE

Letters from George III to Lord Bute, 1756-1766. Edited with an introduction by ROMNEY SEDGWICK. *Macmillan.* 18s.

"There was no one from whom I received so just accounts of the various factions," writes the Duke of Grafton about years during which he was First Lord of the Treasury, ". . . than from Mr. Horace Walpole . . . no person had so good means of getting to the knowledge of what was passing, as himself." But another purpose, besides that of political intrigue, was served by Walpole's researches: in secret from his contemporaries he was writing memoirs of those years. He took infinite pains over the work. When quoting a surprising document, he says:

> Should the original ever appear, as is not impossible, it will corroborate the truth of the rest that I have related. I trust much to collateral evidence for confirming the veracity of these Memoires.

I have found the original, and many others which bear out Walpole's claim to veracity.

Still, there is a central theme about which he does not write but romances: the story of George III, Bute, and the Princess of Wales. This was one of Walpole's "Gothic fancies," a tale rendered mysterious and sinister by his imagination, a pattern unconsciously derived from his own young years, which he stamped upon a historical canvas.

> Ilion! Ilion
> Fatalis incestusque judex
> Et mulier peregrina vertit
> In pulverem! . . .

This motto, deleted by the editor of the *Memoires*, was placed by Walpole on their front page; and they are filled with the idea of a great and mischievous influence exercised over George III, during many years of his reign, by his mother and the "favourite." The writing of the work was concluded in 1772, but Walpole continued adding to it and, looking upon it as "memoires, not history," he deliberately refrained from rendering it "uniform by correction." One of the latest additions, made after 1783, reads:

> I have changed my opinion, I confess, various times on the subject of Lord Bute's favour with the King—but this I take to have been the truth. From the death of her husband the Princess Dowager had the sole influence over her son, and introduced Lord Bute into his confidence—but I believe that even before his accession the King was weary both of his mother and of her favourite, and wanted to, and did early shake off much of that influence. After Lord Bute's resignation, his credit declined still more, and Lord Bute certainly grew disgusted, though he still retained authority enough over the King to be consulted, or to force himself into a share of the counsels that changed so many Ministries till after Lord Chatham's last Administration.

This, though it ante-dates the King's "weariness" of Bute, is a truer account than any yet given of the subject. It is also a confession: Walpole obviously had no evidence for his innumerable statements, and even detailed stories, about the King, Bute, and the Princess; and his ignorance proves that of his contemporaries. They invented and believed tales, which have been uncritically reproduced by generations of historians.

Only George III's letters to Bute could determine the truth about their relations, and about these letters, in spite of published evidence to the contrary, a legend became firmly established: that they had perished in one of the two fires at Luton Hoo. I was instrumental in their rediscovery in 1926, and used them in my own work; and subsequently Mr. Sedgwick was entrusted with the task of editing them. But the editing of these letters was not easy: of 339, only five are dated (one of them June 31st, 1756!). On the others the hour is usually

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marked but not the day, month, or year—"¼ before 10," "past 12," "35 m.pt.3," etc. W. B. Donne, the editor of George III's letters to Lord North, apparently meant to publish them, but gave up the plan, probably because unable to date them. Mr. Sedgwick has done so from internal evidence—a *tour de force* the equal of which I hardly know in work on modern records.

Similarly his introduction is a masterpiece: a gem of research and writing. The historical interest of the King's letters, says Mr. Sedgwick,

> is mainly derived from their bearing on the fictions which in his case have till recently done duty for the facts. In his own time George III was accused by his opponents of attempting to subvert the system of government established by the Revolution. By subsequent historians this charge was translated into that of attempting to subvert the system of responsible government. Thus by a double distortion he has been represented as having endeavoured to imitate the Stuarts when he ought to have anticipated Queen Victoria.

"In reality George III carried on, to the best of his more than limited ability, the system of government which he had inherited from his predecessors."

It was obvious to me, on going through George III's papers, that the long-accepted and oft-repeated story about "reactionary" notions having been "instilled" into him in his young years, was arrant nonsense; still, to destroy a "deep-rooted delusion it is necessary to show not only its absurdity but its origin," and Mr. Sedgwick is the first to trace how "certain misrepresentations of incidents connected with George III's education" have given rise to this unfounded tale. Nor is any trace

> to be found in the letters of any political project more sinister than the vague idea, common to all oppositions of the period, that a "reformation in government" was needed, with a view to "purging out corruption" and combating "the venality of the age."

As for the story about the Princess Dowager and Bute, for which there never was any evidence,

> George III's letters dispose of the only justification for inventing it. They show that the key to the situation was not that the Princess but that her eldest son was infatuated with Bute.

They start with "idolatrous adoration" and "abject self-abasement," and even after George III's accession remain on the whole "otiose from the point of view of the efficient conduct of public business," his role being

> confined to approving Bute's proposals, seeking Bute's advice, echoing Bute's opinions, giving "puts off" to other ministers until he had ascertained Bute's views, and generally acting as Bute's rubber-stamp. If there is any period in the eighteenth century when there was a substantial element of truth in the stock opposition clichés that the King was a "prisoner who had mistaken his gaoler" and that his minister was a *maire du palais*, that period is to be found in the two and a half years between the accession of George III and the resignation of Bute.

Of the letters in this collection, 60 are prior to the King's accession, some 90 cover the first seven months of his reign, about 140 Bute's term at the Treasury, and about 50 the formation of the Grenville Administration in March–April, 1763. For more than two years of that Administration only six letters survive, though it is clear that the correspondence continued—but a clandestine correspondence, which, unless there were reasons to the contrary, was destroyed. For the term of the Rockingham Administration three letters are extant, of January 10th, May 3rd and July 12th; but the contents of each cover about three months, and they prove moreover that the King did not see Bute during that time. These three letters, which I consider the most important single documents ever published for that period, throw quite a new light on the King's attitude towards the Rockingham Administration; and they show that a break, clear and final, occurred between the King and Bute in August, 1766.

Should, however, a new "standard work" on this period appear next year, or a book "revaluating" our knowledge of it, or a biography of George III, I shall not be surprised to read that his letters to Bute have perished, that he was brought up on *The Patriot King*, that he was eminently independent, able, and sane, that in 1766 he daily conspired with Bute against the Rockinghams, and that Lord North was Bute's nominee.

L. B. NAMIER

NEW NOVELS

Iron Gustav. By HANS FALLADA. *Putnam.* 8s. 6d.

The Story Without an End. By BEATRICE MAYOR. *Bodley Head.* 7s. 6d.

Glasgow Keellie. By JOHN MCNEILLIE. *Putnam.* 8s. 6d.

Still Stands My House. By STEFAN WENDT. *Heinemann.* 9s. 6d.

It is difficult to find satisfactory parallels to the present situation of German letters. Many new regimes have expelled or suppressed the writers who directly opposed them, and the pamphleteers and political journalists of Germany have probably suffered a purge no more severe than is usually the lot of those who vociferously support the losing side. The Nazis, however, have extended their action far beyond this, and forced writers into silence or exile not only because of their work, but also by reason of their birth, background or private lives. The axe, in short, has struck vertically as well as horizontally; and the new state has banned not only its literary opponents, but also individuals producing every class of writing, from *belles lettres* to Wild Westerns. It is hard to determine precisely how many authors have been so affected, but it has been estimated that more than half the best-selling German novelists of 1930 have now ceased to publish in their own country. As a consequence, a German shadow-literature has grown up amongst the exiles, which has come consciously to compete with the literature of the Third Reich, to the injury of both parties. The refugees, whether or no they were originally politically-minded, are being driven into a sterile and repetitive anti-Fascism; while the intelligent writers still working in Germany are finding themselves forced to justify the system under which they live simply because they have not yet quarrelled with it. As a result, we are seeing writers of the same language and fundamental interests unnaturally divided into mutually hostile groups. What may be the eventual effects of this is impossible to foresee, but one has only to imagine a war between England and America (fought, perhaps, under the slogan of Tradition versus Progress), with each side expelling those writers whose opinions made them suspect, to realise how absurd and ruinous such a position could become. At present, ideology has not yet wholly got the victory; and, as many of the exiles still produce books of which Nazism would approve (e.g., Mann's historical romances), so in Germany novels are published even to-day which delight the most critical liberal opponent of all that Hitler is supposed to stand for.

Herr Fallada is, to the English public at least, the best-known of the novelists now working in Germany; and his latest book, *Iron Gustav*, shows no obvious loss of intellectual freedom. Upon the framework of an Oedipus-complex minus the Electra motif Herr Fallada has draped a panorama of that tragic spectacle so beloved of German writers—the prosperous Kaiserdom, the war, the famine, the revolutions, the whoring twenties, the deflation and the gradual return of stability. He stops before 1930, and refers to the Nazis only on one occasion. Gustav is a typical—almost Dickens-

ian—figure of pre-war Berlin. An ex-sergeant-major of cavalry, the owner of a fleet of horse cabs, he treats his family with the bullying, unimaginative justice of the good soldier, and, until the very end of his life, never thinks and seldom feels. The purpose of the book is to show how his well-meant oppression ruins and alienates all his children, and to symbolise, I imagine, the way in which imperial Germany drove its people into war and the ruinous aftermath. The stories of the children are well-conceived, the writing (which plainly loses much of its force in translation) vigorous, and the incidents are vividly related; yet somehow the central theme fails to be convincing. The trouble, I feel, is that Herr Fallada has rather overdone it. Gustav is clearly a tiresome and obstinate man, but it seems hardly fair to blame him for the catastrophic ruin that overtakes his family. Otto marries a hunchbank seamstress and refuses to come on leave for three years for fear of his father; Eva becomes the most sordid sort of prostitute, is hypnotised into slavery by a faceless monster, and goes blowsily to prison; Sophie loses her girlish idealism and develops into the nastiest kind of hospital matron; and Erich turns crook, rejects the improper advances of a Socialist politician, and ends in a ragged and shuddering anonymity. It seems a little hard to blame it all on father. *Iron Gustav*, nevertheless, is not only a spirited and iridescent picture of a vanished Germany, but also a demonstration of how a subtle writer can avoid both hypocrisy and censorship by remembering that evil smells as foul by whatever name you call it. Does Herr Fallada wish to display the miseries and corruptions of war? He makes the slaughtered victim a corporal with the iron cross, and the silk-shirted parasite staff officer a Social-Democrat. Will he show the brutality of armed gangs and the self-interest of their employers? The bullies are mutineers, and the swindlers conveniently labelled Socialist. Yet Herr Fallada is not a propagandist against the Left. None of his "Socialists" show the least sign of an ideology, none of them are Jews, and nowhere are they contrasted with virtuous supporters of other political groups. "Socialist" is plainly a label whose real meaning is "party at the time in power"; and when the author scourges its vices one suspects that his real target is nearer his own day. It will be interesting to see for how much longer he can get away with it.

It would be very easy to disparage *The Story Without an End*. One could say: "Here is a book about Betsy, a girl who lives in an allegorical, perfectly flat country called Lowland, and dreams that one day a white coach will descend and carry her up a gleaming and unimaginable mountain. She marries, has a dim platonic affaire with a man she fell in love with when she passed him in the street, and sits at her window listening to the falling rain. At last the coach arrives, gives her a short lift, and leaves her struggling endlessly up the slippery, moving slopes of a vast hill dotted with symbolic obstructions. The author favours a prose-poetic style, and writes with studied naivity in extremely short paragraphs." But although such a synopsis is literally accurate, Mrs. Mayor's book is in fact an exquisite and most unusual piece of writing, in a style with the compact lucidity of a diamond, and with visual images that have the delicate economy of a Chinese drawing. She has attempted to catch the traditional clarity of the child's-eye view, and succeeded in so doing better than any novelist of my recent recollection. Her technique and presentation deserve high praise, but about her message—the word is used advisedly—I am not so confident. We are shown in detail Betsy's struggle for spiritual emancipation; yet her character remains so indeterminate that her metaphysical experiences became merely the unusual adventures of a somewhat

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humourless Alice. She is, no doubt, intended to be Everywoman but, all the same, it was a pity to make her as characterless as the Economic Man. Despite its limitations, *The Story Without an End* (a needlessly whimsical title, incidentally) deserves a wider public than it will probably obtain, for if its mysticism is mild, the fairy-tale element is imaginative and beautifully written. To-day, when allegory, save of the crudest sort, is out of fashion and simple good writing but rarely encountered, Mrs. Mayor's book should prove at once a surprise, a pleasure and a welcome change.

Glasgow Keelie is another epic of the back-street razor-boys who lead lives of Homeric violence, valour and unpleasantness in the darker parts of Gorbals. Young Jimmie robs shops, bashes acquaintances, sleeps with tarts, slashes and is slashed by business rivals, and does his best to emulate the Natural Man as portrayed by George Raft and Edward G. Robinson. In the end he takes one slash too many and is led weeping away to the gallows. The book suffers because Mr. McNeillie is not quite sure whether it is meant to be an epic, an indictment or a bit of good, bloody fun; and because he has been too squeamish to exploit the sordid possibilities of the theme as fully as have several of his predecessors. *Glasgow Keelie* is mildly readable, but does nothing that *Egil's Saga* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* have not done a great deal better already.

Still Stands My House is a sad example of a talented writer vainly exerting his skill and sensibility to bring life into a plot so platitudinous that every twist is a cliché and every development as familiar as a French communiqué. Scene: Germany. Time: 1932–33. An old squire contemplates a portrait of the Kaiser, an old capitalist bellows his outmoded individualism, a wicked son-in-law betrays the Firm to the Nazis, a saintly Jewish scientist is pilloried, an S.A. man murders his friend and confesses on his knees to the friend's mother, the S.S. leer and stroke their truncheons in their whitewashed cellar, the treacherous lawyer bows out his Jewish client and dials Party Headquarters, and so deplorably on. Herr Wendt is, presumably, a refugee, and the brown days of 1933 were no doubt the most critical period of his life—as they may have been in the lives of all of us. All the same, his subject is, as far as such a thing is possible, completely exhausted, and novels based upon it are, unless they approach from a new angle, practically unreadable, however technically competent they may be. It is a pity that so able a writer should have wasted his energies in attempting to make palatable once more such chewed-over and digested material.

JOHN MAIR

A BOOK WORTH READING

Philosophy for Our Times. By C. E. M. JOAD. *Nelson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

There is no need to say that this book will be found eminently readable; it is by Professor Joad. Though it deals with very difficult themes, which many previous philosophers have contrived to envelop in Egyptian darkness, in this land of Goshen there is light. Whether we agree or disagree with his opinions, we know what they are: whereas it would be easy to name many writers on such subjects who escape either confirmation or refutation by sailing through the channel of unintelligibility.

After a sketch of the confusion of thought in which the present generation is involved, and the terrible condition to which the world has been reduced by the misuse of the marvellous achievements of science, Dr. Joad proceeds to clear his path by showing the bases on which his own philosophy rests. These may, I think, be fairly summed up as a modified Berkeleyanism. The physical world does not "really" exist. In Berkeley's own words, "All the choir and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind; their *being* is to be *perceived* or *known*." When we abstract from "matter" those qualities which our own mind contributes to it, nothing is left. Even Kant's *Ding an Sich* or Mill's "permanent possibility of sensation" is, when carefully inspected, "a night in which all cows are black."

I think that so far Dr. Joad is right: at any rate it is all but impossible to see how he can be answered, and many modern physicists would assent. But, valuable as this destructive part of the book is, it is worthless except as a preparation for the positive chapters which follow. There *is* reality in the world. "Values" are ultimate: truth, goodness, beauty cannot be analysed away into mere "subjective" phantasms. It is here that Dr. Joad has his hardest task, and that he will meet with the strongest opposition; for there can be no doubt that what is thought good on one side of the Pyrenees is thought bad on the other, or that what seems beautiful to A is often ugly to B. One asks why, if nothing is left to a stone when the qualities of hardness and weight are seen to be given to it by us, the beauty of a Bach fugue still remains when it is subjected to the same dissolving process. None the less, one admires the ability with which Dr. Joad attacks his problem.

Finally, he comes to the practical application of all this thinking: for, like Plato and Spinoza, he would not desire to think right unless he wished to do good; and his concluding chapters deserve to be studied by all who have at heart the betterment of the world in which they live.

E. E. KELLETT

AMERICA IN THE THIRTIES

Since Yesterday. By FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It was not to be expected that Mr. Allen could resist writing an account of the U.S.A. in the thirties, as a sequel to his successful survey of the previous decade. With characteristic *élan* he parades the trivialities, crazes and divertisements of the age before our eyes. We remember miniature golf and monopoly, recall the Culbertsons, kidnapping and swing music, recollect Repeal and Old Gold competitions, while headlines, achievements and the familiar catch-phrases of the time rise to our lips. On this highly-coloured background, the author mounts his solid chapters on the Depression, the New Deal and the Changing Soul of the Nation. This is American journalism of the highest class; it is neither racy nor vulgar, but swift, compelling, accurate and judicious. The pile burns very brightly; but the materials which the thirties provide are rather too heavy and severe to rival the brilliant bonfire which he constructed of America in the twenties.

He records; he infers; and wisely does not fare further. His method possibly deterred him, for it is designed to show what events Americans thought at the time important—whether or not those events were in fact of lasting importance. Perhaps we may be permitted to analyse, to point a generalisation, at a distance of three thousand miles and in a mood (however much Americans may doubt it) of singular detachment where that country is concerned. For instance, the author is sometimes inaccurate. Of September, 1929, he writes: "The economic skies seemed clear; business was booming." Neither statement is correct. Sixty per cent. of Americans then

were engaged in farming, and as some time before 1929 the world price of wheat had depreciated, their purchasing power had diminished. Large numbers farmed for a quick monetary return, buying their equipment and homes on the hire-purchase system. And the enormous growth of hire-purchase gave an added impetus to the collapse when it came. The Depression shook America far harder than any other country. Europe had been inured since the war to unemployment and distressed areas, and now for the first time, Americans realised that it was not a man's fault to be out of work. They pondered over the savage retaliations which outraged Nature took for sinful farming. They stared gloomily at the hearth where the old gods of Wall Street lay morally and intellectually shattered and they reflected mournfully on the inability of public men to bring back prosperity.

With great clarity, Mr. Allen describes the Roosevelt administration, the labour and constitutional struggles. He shows how far the New Deal was a series of improvisations and how its speed and extent bewildered or enraged critics. No doubt he is unbiassed, but does he not, as a good liberal, withdraw the hem of his skirt when he encounters the jovial figure of the President? For all the humanity of the New Deal, was not Roosevelt as wicked a politician as the rest? Yes, it is only too true. The President is not a fool—he is far too clever a statesman to forget the advantages of being a politician. Indeed he was detested by business men and the Old Guard, not because they were his targets, but because he fought them with their own weapons of corruption, patronage, and political skulduggery.

The economic and social disasters of the decade produced a new phenomenon—social consciousness. As in England the young became political, some Communist, all earnest; unlike England, their elders tried to keep pace and entered into an orgy of self-education. The Reader's Digest replaced Ballyhoo. They attended even more lectures. The U.S.A., which had spent the twenties persuading herself that she had no conscience, now wore hers on her sleeve, and plunged perplexedly after a creed, listening to radio commentators, reading columnists. From their countrymen's distress, they learnt sympathy, and soon the great beating heart of America was wrung by European tragedies. The heart is a splendid organ; and we can ill afford to sneer when self-education among the middle-aged middle classes is not a spectacle to be met with in this country. But a head is needed to direct philanthropy and compassion. In internal affairs a head was found—not least among the young liberal lawyers of the Administration. In foreign affairs—well, in foreign affairs, as we can lugubriously state with conviction, a head is most useful, and really a necessity.

NOEL ANNAN

PIONEER, NOT HERO

Edward Whymper. By FRANK S. SMYTHE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 21s.

There is one point which Frank Smythe has taken for granted in this book on Edward Whymper, and that is the half-legendary position he occupied thirty years ago. His then almost unbelievable ascent of the Matterhorn, the subsequent tragedy, and the notoriety it gave him set him upon an unassailable pedestal. Then followed his *Scrambles Amongst the Alps*, which brought to the comfortable adventure-thirsting middle class his exploits and discoveries in matter of fact, well-written prose. It served as an inspiration to many who had never before dreamt of mountaineering, and to many more who indulged in the luxury of armchair adventure. Whymper was Switzerland's greatest advertisement.

Few of these people can have much idea of what Whymper was like behind this publicity, which never deserted him. Frank Smythe has a difficult task in trying to show us; for, once he has established the inner conflict in Whymper, there is little else to show; his life was a public life, which hid no secrets. Edward Whymper was born with great abilities and endowed with vision, but at the age of fifteen he was set to work in his father's engraving office, doing monotonous soul-destroying work, and destroy his soul it effectively managed to do. The lad kept a diary, so that we can watch this in process, and see his remarkable grasp of facts; it gives us as good a picture of life in the fifties as could be compiled from a collection of contemporary cuttings—fires in the city each week, frequent rail accidents, banks collapsing, the Crystal Palace fountains, and the Crimean war. The nature of his work forces him to concentrate on the little details round him, and slowly but surely the ambitions and visions which occasionally break out in his diary are eliminated altogether. Matter triumphed over mind, Whymper's large decided mouth won over his brown eyes. Smythe has it that if Whymper had less sense of filial duty and had followed his own inclinations rather than those of his father he would have become a public figure of first importance.

He was commissioned to do various engravings in the Alps, and there the pent-up energy broke forth. The 'fifties and 'sixties were the halcyon heyday of mountaineering, and in 1865, when he was 25, Whymper successfully climbed the Matterhorn, a remarkable exploit crowned with disaster, when on the descent the rope broke and plunged four of their party to their death. The vicious notoriety which this brought threw Whymper further back on to himself, and throughout his life he was never intimate with any friend, until he married at the age of 66; but this marriage lasted only four years. He died in 1911. He lived according to a regime, disciplined and exacting; his climbs were not for the satisfaction they gave him, but undertaken on a strictly scientific basis, collecting plants and rock chips, boiling water at different altitudes; in the Andes, and later in the Rockies under the *aegis* of the C.P.R., he was mapping out new country.

It would be difficult for Smythe to be dull, and this book is interesting for its picture of the early Zermatt days, and the portrait it paints of Whymper. Yet it could have been better if we had more Smythe on Whymper and less Whymper on Whymper; his character soon becomes clear, and after the Matterhorn has been conquered, one ascent repeats itself in another.

RAYMOND ALDERSON

THE GAIETY OF MR. ELIOT

Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats. By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 3s. 6d.

I Had a Dog and a Cat. By KAREL CAPEK. *Allen and Unwin.* 3s. 6d.

Are you a Prufrockian or a Waste Lander? Such perhaps will be the debating point of the Eliot Society, meeting on Friday nights in the 'seventies. Meanwhile a few of us may regret, as we follow in the wake of later developments, the loss of Mr. Eliot's early gaiety. Prufrock and the sea-girls and the coffee-spoons—how far off they seem. Sweeney has come to rest in an icy little melodrama; we have watched the hippo yield finally to the Rock. Where (we may ask) are the housemaids and the crumpets? Yet in odd channels, prescribed by its author's caution, comedy survives. Some years ago the *Criterion* published a small group of poems by

What doctors say about *next Winter*

"Under modern conditions," doctors say, "the human body is rather like a battery. It gets 'run-down' in winter and is 'recharged' by summer sunshine and air, ready for the winter to come. But last winter took more out of us than usual; next winter may prove harder still. Because the natural balance has become upset, we shall all need more 'charging' than usual this summer. And, with wartime restrictions, it rather looks as if we are going to get less—unless we can adjust the balance with a suitable tonic. Luckily medical science to-day can tell us *exactly* what that tonic should be—organic phosphorus and protein."

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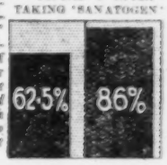

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Mr. Eliot called *Five-finger Exercises*, with the charming self-portrait :

> How unpleasant to meet Mr. Eliot!
> With his features of clerical cut,
> And his brow so grim
> And his mouth so prim
> And his conversation, so nicely
> Restricted to What Precisely
> And If and Perhaps and But. . . .

—in which Mr. Eliot's presence and the voice of Edward Lear doubly delight the reader. So distinct, so calculated a use of pastiche (it never spills over into parody or flat imitation) accompanies us even on fancy flights. Never, we may be certain, however exactly Mr. Eliot might echo Lear, should we be allowed to catch the note of escape, of nostalgia and wild romance which transfigures the original. Lear's is an *appealing* nonsense ; Mr. Eliot, when he takes up the same tune, remains cool and demurely smiling. The cats in his *Old Possum's Book* enjoy some odd frolics, but they are practical cats, they don't fall in love with owls or go to sea in a sieve.

> Jellicle cats are black and white,
> Jellicle cats are rather small ;
> Jellicle cats are merry and bright,
> And pleasant to hear when they caterwaul.
> Jellicle cats have cheerful faces,
> Jellicle cats have bright black eyes ;
> They like to practise their airs and graces
> And wait for the Jellicle moon to rise.

By contrast, the Gumbie cat sits and sits all day, and at night creeps down to the basement to teach the mice deportment and knitting. Magical Mr. Mistoffelees performs conjuring tricks, the last and most successful being a litter of seven kittens produced out of a hat. Old Deuteronomy must never be disturbed. It is a sign of Spring in Pall Mall when Bustopher Jones appears in his white spats. One glare from the Great Rumpuscat and the street clears of dogs. Between such personages and human beings contact must obviously be a little difficult ; and Mr. Eliot favours a Chinese approach :

> With Cats, some say, one rule is true :
> *Don't speak until you're spoken to.*
> Myself I do not hold with that—
> I say you should ad-dress a Cat.
> But always keep in mind that he
> Resents familiarity.
> I bow, and taking off my hat,
> Ad-dress him in this form : O CAT!
> But if he is the Cat next door,
> Whom I have often met before
> (He comes to see me in my flat)
> I greet him with an OOPSA CAT!
> I think I've heard them call him James—
> But we've not got so far as names.

The only cat of importance omitted from this delightful little book seems to be Mr. Eliot's own—a " porpentine cat " mentioned at the end of the self-portrait already quoted from ; one would like to have heard more of him.

Dogs as well as cats were originally to have played a part in these verses, and in keeping them out Mr. Eliot—to quote his publisher—" is believed to have been fortified by a growing desire for the company of *cats*, and a growing perception that it would be impolite to wrap them up with *dogs*." *I Had a Dog and a Cat* mixes the two with complete success ; Capek, indeed, seems to have possessed a humorous sympathy that would have extended to any animal with whom one can come to terms. He writes playfully, sentimentally (a sentiment light as toy balloons), and with an acute eye for the behaviour of his pets. Witness his description of a puppy that has reached the stage of dancing by moonlight—" it is terribly like the Dalcrose School "—or of the half-wild colony of cats that prowl round Trajan's column in Rome. He sums up the difference between two hemispheres with the remark : " Personal experience is enough for a cat ; a dog wants to be a success." The title of his book, by the way, is an understatement. To judge from the number of litters lovingly recorded he must have had several hundred cats and dogs.

G. W. STONIER

Companion into Hampshire. By L. COLLISON MORLEY. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

There are two approaches to a new part of the countryside ; the first is to take the villages and landscape as they come, with the Ordnance map as rod and staff ; the second is to tackle them in the light of their past. In this addition to the County Companion series, L. Collison Morley, the author of *Companion into Surrey*, has chosen the second method. In a county whose past is so well stocked as this, his is the right choice, and by carefully keeping the balance with the twentieth century he has written a pleasant, sensible and interesting book. Hampshire cannot be the author's county. He is far too impartial ; and for that reason he can discriminate and so avoids a minor fault which disfigured some of the other volumes in this series ; their authors knew so much, had such a bulk of lore to draw upon, that the reading was inclined to be costive. Mr. Collison Morley has, however, taken great pains, and hardly a village in the county is left without an honourable mention. The New Forest is sympathetically described. It needs sympathy, for its splendour is now greatly inpaired ; and it needs knowledge, for there is so much of the past in it that the significance of clumps and glades can easily be lost. *Companion into Hampshire* sets out to play the companion rather than the guide, and it succeeds because the author has the knack of passing on knowledge without allowing it to seem secondhand ; he has, moreover, appreciated the fact that sights are better seen than described, and so has concentrated on an aspect that is essentially literary.

Mr. Arthur Waley's review last week of *Hopousia*, by J. D. Unwin (Allen and Unwin, 21*s.*), contained a particularly unlucky misprint. The book, Mr. Waley explained, set out to prove that " social energy depends upon sexual continence." But we printed, instead of " continence," " continuance," which suggests a different, though perhaps equally plausible, hypothesis.

Week-end Competitions

No. 535

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes are offered for a passage of invective on any contemporary figure in the style of Pope on Sporus or Dryden on Zimri. Competitors are reminded that there is a law of libel ; their victim's identity should be hidden by a pseudonym, although recognisable by the initiated. No entry must exceed 20 lines.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by Friday, May 17th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 533

Set by Sam Smiles

The usual prizes are offered for four footnotes, in the style of Gibbon, to a history of the Decline and Fall of Europe. Competitors are reminded that Gibbon's footnotes are usually not concerned with his principal theme.

Report by Sam Smiles

Polysyllables are not enough. Moreover, some of the competitors who caught Gibbon's style failed to notice that he revelled in the exercise of wit, and that he often used his footnotes to display a mischievous contempt for decorum. Several entries contained a couple of good notes. Here is Pibwob :

The value, benefit and superiority of Western Civilisation was the theme of a thousand panegyrics ; and the only defect of these pleasing compositions is the want of truth and common sense.

The Brothers Wright have romantically been compared with Icarus ; but he destroyed only himself and not the self-assurance of a continent.

David Freeman is no less excellent :

Unmarried Wives

The philosopher will smile to recollect that when the Hunnish invader was thundering at her gates the Parliament of Great Britain proved itself equal to the conduct of an empire by solemnly debating the most decent appellation for a soldier's concubine.

Public Relief

In granting relief to the aged the distinctions of class were carefully preserved. The indigent poor, to whom alone a means test was applicable, received ten shillings weekly from the public bounty, but one thousand pounds a year were allotted to the higher civil servants while three and a half times that amount hardly gratified the wearers of the judicial ermine.

And here is John J. Dunne :

Goering

Footnote.—A visitor to one of the Field-Marshal's numerous country estates records the astonishment of the guests on being received by their host attired in the shining garb of Lohengrin, while they were later invited to witness with curiosity or embarrassment the energetic copulation of two steeds whose magnificent proportions and vigorous movements attested the purity of their Aryan blood.

The Munich Conference

Footnote.—The illustrated journals which enjoyed such public favour at this time invariably depict Mr. Chamberlain carrying a *folded* umbrella, and, whilst this curious trait afforded a frequent occasion for humorous comment there were many who professed to discover in the Prime Minister's attachment to this harmless and useful object conclusive evidence of his pacific intentions. It may, however, be remarked that the umbrella is supposed by the psycho-analysts to possess a phallic significance, by reason, no doubt, of its shape and its ability to provide a symbolical representation of the phenomenon of tumescence. The hypothesis, though it may appear fanciful to the psychologist, is convenient to the historian, who may be permitted to perceive in an article carried more for ornament than for use a fitting symbol of the impotence of a senile Empire.

The first prize goes without hesitation to Cascabel, who explains that his heading comes from a selection in the *Gentleman's Magazine for June*, 1788, of Gibbon's less seemly annotations. I think the second prize should go to John J. Dunne. Flaccus, C. F. Rathbone, and J. C. B. Date were runners-up.

A selection from Mr. Gibbon's learned and entertaining Notes to *The Decline and Fall of Europe :*

A frugal diet of carrots and eggs sustained the ferocious temper of the German conqueror. The philosopher may smile at this lust for mortification, which, in the absence of a more sinful organ, imposes its melancholy laws upon the stomach.

That the traitors numbered among their company a bishop is a matter rather for censure than surprise.

See H.C. Deb. vol. 694, ser. 12, p. 327. The danger of an insurrection among the common soldiery was on this occasion averted by the specious promise that mistresses would be provided. The impartial historian must reject the indulgent gloss of Signor Hassenweiter, who, in his elegant and copious commentary on the Debates, assumes the omission of the word " for."

In the brief space of a single year the Holy Rollers Foundation College, Wapentake, Ga., could offer its rustic audience the spectacle of three former monarchs and five fugitive presidents expounding a system of government which few had revealed the capacity to comprehend, and none the power to preserve.

CASCABEL

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

KINGSLEY HOTEL.
NEAR the British Museum, Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1. Telephones and free electric heating in all Bedrooms. Numerous private bathrooms. Bedroom, Bath and Breakfast from 9s. 6d. per night. Illustrated Booklet and inclusive Terms on application.

WARWICK CLUB, Ltd., 21 St. George's Square, S.W.1. Room and Breakfast, 5s. a night or 30s. weekly; with dinner, 6s. 6d. a night or 35s. to 2 *gns.* weekly. Vic. 7289.

ASK for descriptive list (3d. post free) of 165 INNS and HOTELS managed by the PEOPLE'S REFRESHMENT HOUSE ASSOCIATION, LTD.
P.R.H.A., LTD., 193 Regent Street, W.1.

EDINBURGH. Manor Hotel, 50 Manor Place. Terms from 13s. 6d. per day. Reduction per week. Tel.: 228191.

ACHILL HEAD HOTEL, Achill Island, Co. Mayo. Situated amidst magnificent scenery. Hot and cold running water. Motor launch belonging to Hotel for deep-sea fishing and cruising. Electric light. Fully licensed. A.A., R.I.A.C., I.T.A. appointments. Full particulars apply JOHN MACNAMARA (Proprietor).

GLENBAY HOTEL, MALINMORE, CO. DONEGAL. Beautifully situated, overlooking Donegal Bay. A Restful Holiday where perfect peace reigns. A.A., R.I.A.C. CUNNINGHAM.

ISLAND OFF IRISH WEST COAST.
Magnificent Scenery. Mild climate.
Amethyst Hotel, Achill Island.
Facing Atlantic Ocean and surrounded by Mountains. Good food, comfortable beds. Hot and cold water. Turf fires Good accommodation still available May and June.
Terms: £2 10s. to £3 10s. weekly.
Write MISS T. BLACKHAM, Keel, Achill, Ireland.

WENSLEYDALE. Near Aysgarth. Guest House. SMITH, Warnford, Thoralby, Aysgarth, Leyburn, Yorks.

LAKELAND. Victoria Hotel. Beautiful Buttermere, between Cockermouth stn. and Honister Pass. Tel. 2.

RESPITE AND RECREATION
Make the most of your holidays this year by staying at Langdale Estate. Unique and varied accommodation amidst delightful surroundings. Furnished cottages, guest house and the new Pillar Hotel. Tennis and squash courts, swimming pool, etc. Illustrated booklet on request. The Manager, Langdale Estate, Great Langdale, near Ambleside. Tel.: Grasmere 82.

ABERYSTWYTH. Beautiful situation. Modern. Away from war atmosphere. MASON, Gwyldwr, Llanbadarn. 'Phone: 617.

WYE VALLEY HOLIDAYS. Paying guests taken in Crafts Community. Vegetarian diet. Barn House, Brockweir, nr. Chepstow.

N. WALES, Llanfair Talhaiarn, nr. Abergele, peaceful Elwy Valley. Glorious wlkg. Glasfryn G.H. MRS. RODWELL.

HOME COMFORTS in a Seaside BUNGALOW, fully furnished for 6. Living room, verandah, bathroom, kitchen. (Gas or Electric Cooking.) From 2 *gns.* wkly. Private Estate. Safety area. Directly facing finest beach on N. Wales coast. Free brochure. SANDY COVE ESTATE, Kinmel Bay, Rhyl, N. Wales.

NEWQUAY, Cornwall. ST. RUMONS HOTEL. Cliff-edge. Licensed. 72 Bedrooms, h. & c. Adj. Golf. Bathing fr. Hotel. Dancing. Opening June 1st. From 3½ *gns.* Tel. 2978.

CORNWALL. PENZANCE. Comfortable guest-house. Close sea. Moderate. "Westbourne," Alexandra Road.

CORNWALL. To let, holidays or period, furnished cottages overlooking sea between St. Ives and Lands End. Grand spot. Bathing coves. Moorland walks. Terms and photos. MRS. SEVIER, The Bungalow, Pendeen.

WOODY BAY HOTEL, nr. Lynton. Facing sea; unsurpassingly beautiful scenery and bathing. From 3½ *gns.*

ROCKINGHAM, Westward Ho! Devon ideal, quiet, comfortable holiday. 2½–4 *gns.* MISS FOLL (Northam 183).

CORNWALL, POLZEATH. Mod. fur. bung., overlooking sea. Slumberland beds, electricity, wireless, garage. APLIN.

CORNWALL. Comfortable Guest House, in unspoilt Cornish village. Modern conveniences; sea and country; excellent cuisine; yachting, boating, bathing, fishing. MISS GARLAND, Wellside, Polruan-by-Fowey. 48.

ST. AGNES, Cornwall. Furnished bungalow, close sea; garden, elec. light, bath, h. and c. HICKS, Heather-Croft.

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON. S. Devon Coast. "Mountway" Guest House. Mod. comfort. Ord. or veg. diet. Tel. 290.

A CORNISH HOLIDAY. Join young PARTY staying in chalet nr. Pendeen. Bathing, Climbing, Walking, Tennis. July 20th–August 1st. Box 7390.

DEVON. Board Res. Glorious position. Minute sea. Garden. Sun Terrace. From 3 *gns.* "Fontebay," Combe Martin.

SWANAGE. Furnished bungalow. 5 rooms, all services. 2 mins. sea, 10 town; high, sheltered; glorious scenery. 46 Upper Park Road, Kingston, Surrey.

SOMERSET, Mendips. Anglo-French family receive guests, 17th Cent. farmhouse, centre for Bath, Wells and Glastonbury. Own dairy and garden produce. Electricity, hot and cold water. Books. Moderate tariff. MME. LAVER, Wyndhams, Shepton Mallet. 'Phone: 57.

CORNWALL (nr. Padstow). Caravan, 2 tents. Sleep 4. Bathing from caravan. 2 *gns.* Box 7414.

TORQUAY, Howden Court Hotel. Garden, sun lounge. Private sitting rooms and bathrooms if required. A.A. appointed. Tel.: 280711.

A SUNSHINE Holiday Choice! A modern fully furnished BUNGALOW or FLAT on South Coast at Saltdean, Brighton. Safety zone. Splendid Beach, Promenade, Under Cliff Walk, Marine Parade. Tennis, Golf. Riding on the Downs. Magnificent Lido. Modern Bathing Pool. Club facilities. From 2½ *gns.* weekly. Folder Free. SALTDEAN ESTATE CO., LTD., Saltdean, Brighton.

GEORGIAN Farmhouse offers ideal holiday in unspoilt country 13 miles Eastbourne. 300 acres rough shooting, golf, tennis, riding. 3½ *gns.* BATTEN, Cralle Place, Vines Cross, Sussex. Tel.: Horeham Rd. 2.

TIMBERSCOMBE, FERNHURST, HASLEMERE. Peaceful retreat. Ideal country. Tel.: Fernhurst 6.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS—continued

17TH CENTURY GUEST HOUSE. Divan beds. Fitted basins. Books. Excellent cooking. Lovely surroundings. Direct London coach service. Hughenden, Goudhurst, Kent. Tel. 88.

BENBECULA, DITCHLING. Delightful, quiet position facing Downs: h. & c. all rooms. Tel.: Hassocks 146.

SUNBATHING Guest House, every conv., own seashore, safe bathing, tennis. N.S., Woodside, Wootton, I.O.W.

CHILDREN'S Holidays. Delightful summer vacations Children's Holiday Centre, "Charters Towers," Bexhill-on-Sea fr. July 27th, reasonable cost. Safe area. Particulars on application.

ASHDOWN FOREST. Double divan room. Two guineas each full board. GERTRUDE DOW, Chelwoodgate, Haywards Heath.

SALTDEAN, Brighton. Glendower, first-class guest house. Facing sea, modern comfort, quiet. Rottingdean 9552.

DELIGHTFUL Chiltern village, 23 miles London. Full board 9s. daily. "Merilees," Wayside, Chipperfield, Herts.

W. SUSSEX XVth C. Guest House, modernised. Downs, garden, tennis: ideal walking centre. ALLUM, Thatched Eaves, Bignor, Pulborough. (Sutton 229.)

RYE, Sussex. Old Hope Anchor Private Hotel. Quiet situation. Central heating and log fires. H. and C. all bedrooms. 'Phone 126.

NEW FOREST. The Guest House, Godshill, Fordingbridge. Peaceful surroundings. H. & C. Riding.

FITTLEWORTH, Sussex. Fortrie Guest House. Comfort. Breakfast in bed if desired. 'Phone: 61.

PERSONAL

SPANISH Lady gives lessons, grammar conversation. Box 7358.

WANTED. Private Italian, Czech, or Polish lessons preferably in exchange for English. Box 7372.

ONE or two children received as paying guests in private home, safe area, large garden, fields and woods. Expert care. Own child, 5 years. TELCO, "Westmead," Park Av., Chorley Wood.

LIFE-SIZE PORTRAITS DONE QUICKLY by R.A. exhibitor, crayons. £5 5s. Primrose 0579.

WANTED, partner for antiquarian bookshop. Small capital. Good knowledge of English Literature. Lady or gentleman, latter not liable for military service. Box 7331.

3RD FAREWELL. I shall continue photographing at 5 Paddington Street as long as possible, but this is the last of my weekly series of advertisements in this paper. Arrangements for Christmas cards are not complete, but enquiries about them or any other work will be answered from 5 Paddington Street, W.1 (Wel. 4950), or forwarded to me. ANTHONY PANTING.

BUSINESS gentlemen (friendly alien) wants room in garden house, N.W., and week-end suggestions countryside. Box 7417.

FOREIGN ACCENT ELIMINATED — GLADYS NYREN, L.R.A.M. (Elocution). 162, Haverstock Hill, N.W.3.

"BREVIA" SELF-TAUGHT SPEEDWRITING. Fastest, simplest Shorthand known. Complete system, 3s. 6d. BREVIA (S), 31 Townshend Court, London, N.W.8.

BLUEBELLS. Week amongst Bluebell Woods. 20s. ORIELS, Doddington, Kent.

MONOMARK holders have a Confidential Town address, 5s. p.a. Write BM/MONO12, W.C.1.

ACIDITY, INDIGESTION, CONSTIPATION. Sufferers are invited to investigate a new and most successful method of restoring the natural functions by scientifically prescribed abdominal exercises done in bed before rising. Write C. H. MALCOLM, 62 The Chase, Eastcote, Middlesex.

MISCELLANEOUS

YOUR favourite suit copied exactly in "John Peel" Cumberland Tweed, £5 5s. 0d. Fit guaranteed or money refunded. Patterns free. REDMAYNE, 10 Wigton, Cumberland.

IF you enjoy good music you will be interested in "The Monthly Letter," our critical and impartial review of current recordings. To our customers we make no charge; to others the annual subscription is 3s. 6d. (abroad, 7s. 6d.). May we send a specimen copy, with particulars of our unique record service? Catalogues of our famous hand-made instruments are also available on request. E.M.G. HAND-MADE GRAMOPHONES, LTD., 11 Grape Street, W.C.2.

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ACCOMMODATION

To Let and Wanted

FOR Visitors to London or permanent residence stay at Nell Gwynn House. This magnificent centrally located building provides high class furnished Flats for one or two persons. Electric Kitchen for preparing light meals. Elegant bathroom, telephone, radio and every modern convenience. From 3 *gns.* weekly. Also unfurnished Flats from £90 p.a. Restaurant available with Club facilities. Air Raid shelters. Brochure, Nell Gwynn House, Sloane Avenue, Chelsea, S.W.3. Ken. 6095.

YOUNG man wishes share flat with another, Ealing district, from June 1st. Box 7360.

FINCHLEY ROAD, Met., Hampstead. Delightful large studio room, 17s. 6d.; smaller, 12s. 6d.; or unf. Every convenience. 37 Greencroft Gardens, N.W.6. Mai. 6792.

SWISS COTTAGE. Unf. room 10s., every comfort and convenience. Service or meals available. 16 Belsize Sq. N.W.3.

PRIVATE Hotel, 13 St. Georges Sq., S.W.1. H. & C. Lounge. Permanent guests from 2 *gns.* 24 bus passes. Vic. 3306.

"COUNTRY" views in London. Rooms, f. & unf., 14s.–30s. 22 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3. PRI. 1043.

BIRMINGHAM. F. or unf. bed sitting-rooms for professional or business women. Large house, beautiful garden, telephone, constant h.w. DALE, 318 Hagley Road, Edgbaston.

PROFESSIONAL man offers accom. to man in private house (family evacuated), W.2. Every comfort. A.R.P. shelter. Good service. Quiet. Garden. Accessible. Box 7307.

HAMPSTEAD overlooking Heath. Furnished suite 3 rooms, bathroom in private house. Excellent cooking. Near 24 bus. Inclusive 5 *gns.* double, 3½ *gns.* single. Box 7304.

HAMPSTEAD. 7 Lancaster Grove. University woman has divan rooms, h. & c. Gas fires, rings. 15s.—25s. Breakfast if required. PRI. 0160.

PAYING GUESTS (two) received in picturesque Tudor house, with large gardens; 33 m. London; near Chilterns. Congenial for writers or artists. 2 *gns.* weekly. Box 7397.

CHARMING small room, large window overlooking own secluded garden. 14s. 6d. Private house. Use kit. Pri. 6534.

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB. Attractively furnished bedroom and sitting-room. Use of large kitchen, bathroom, garden. Quiet house; 1 min. bus stop, 5 min. Golders Green Station. Suit 2. 32s. 6d. 'Phone: Spe. 0218 mornings.

BLOOMSBURY. University people have rooms with breakfast from 25s. H. & c. all rooms; baths unlimited and hot. 90/91 Guilford St. TER. 4568.

FARMHOUSE. Board residence. Indoor sanitation; bus route. MARKING, Oakwood Hill, Ockley.

FREE Household—No Restrictions. Modern furniture, 17s. 6d.–25s. 93 Oakley Street. FLA. 9970.

FOR the Night or for Life.
HAMPSTEAD RESIDENTIAL BUREAU will find you the right accommodation. 91 Fellows Road, N.W.3. Primrose 6772.

DOWNS, sea, safety, vegetables. Furnished 6 room Old Dairy House, Chaldon, Dorset. Electricity, bath, etc. 35s. p.w. Apply 13 West Hill, N.6. Mou. 7848.

WEEK-END accommodation required couple with child in shack, caravan, cottage, Bucks or Surrey, within 30 miles London. BRADSHAW, 54 Eton Rise, N.W.3. PRI. 0928.

EDGE of Chilterns. Lovely country. Quiet, comfortable Inn. Good cooking. Partial board, £2 2s.; full, £2 12s. 6d. weekly. Convenient station; London one hour. Rosebery Arms. Cheddington 222.

BELSIZE PARK STN. Comfortable bed-sitting room (single or double); gas ring; c. h. w. Meals optional. Very moderate. 48 Glenloch Road, N.W.3. PRI. 2116.

ATTRACTIVE Furnished Cottage available. Small, cheap. Bures 267. Box 7192.

W.C.1. Unfurnished rooms, separate kitchenettes. View weekends or after 7 p.m. 15 Doughty Street. Chancery 7426.

LAST Fortnight July. Good accommodation. Married couple, year-old baby. Sea preferred. BOURNE, 1 Squitchey Lane, Oxford.

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, Etc.

FOR SALE. Timbered thatched cottage just modernised, facing south; 3 bed. 1 large sitting-room, kit., bathroom, lavatory, H. & C. ¼ acred garden. Level position in heart of Essex country. Address: Cross Cottage, Waltham Cross, Great Bardfield, near Dunmow. Price £750 freehold. Box 7401.

THATCHED secluded cottage N. Hampshire. Furnished. £1. p.w. Main water outside. 3 bed. 2 living rooms. Box 7402

CAMBS-HUNTS BORDERS
To Let Furnished
HILTON HALL. A Period Residence (1600), 12 miles from Cambridge and containing: 2 recep., 6 bed and dressing rooms, bathroom; good garden with plunge pool, tennis court and orchard. Moderate rent. Apply: J. CARTER JONAS & SONS, 27–28 Market Hill, Cambridge. (Sole Agents.)

SUSSEX DOWNS. To let, furn. or unfurn., charming modern bungalow, ideally situated, 7 m. Worthing. Box 7315.

JORDANS, Bucks. Small house to let unf.; 7 rooms, garage; garden and orchard. £150 incl. rates. Box 7405.

TO LET unfurnished, at Speen, on the Chilterns. "Highwood," a brick-built bungalow, 2 reception, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, bath, electricity, main water, garage, large garden with glorious views; 5 miles High Wycombe, bus. £52 per year exclusive. Key at Red House Farm, Speen, or telephone Amersham 936.

ROTTINGDEAN. Furnished house, 2 large living, 4 bed-rms., etc. All electric. Garage. To let or sell. Box 7365.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

MISREADING THE BUDGET—FIXED EQUITY VALUATIONS—TAX-FREE DIVIDENDS—TIN SHARES

THE Stock Exchange is still hopelessly misreading the Budget. On the one hand the gilt-edged market has risen to fresh heights—the new 3 per cent. War Loan even commands a premium—while on the other the leading equity shares continue to droop under the shadow of the new Statute of (Dividend) Limitations. One firm of brokers, however, share my jaundiced view. Referring to the Budget gap between revenue and expenditure they write: "This in itself need not be inflationary, but the fact remains that there is actually in progress to-day an inflation of wages and that as long as there is no conscription or compulsory allocation of labour the competition of Government and private enterprise for the services of a diminishing body of labour will accentuate the inflationary rise in wages and therefore the inflationary rise in prices. Until this problem is resolved it seems unlikely that the Government can borrow on better terms than those already established." It certainly does not deserve to, while it funks this all important question of labour. Each day it becomes more obvious that in the financial and economic, as in other fields of our war effort, the policy of this dangerously complacent Government is tragically inadequate. How the heart sinks to read Sir John Simon's name again put forward as Chancellor of the Exchequer in some of the paper Cabinets of this critical week!

* * *

If the new "fixed equity" shares are not yet in favour it is because the investor is partly bemused by Sir John Simon and partly confused by the changes in dividend necessitated by the Statute of Limitations. The Stock Exchange itself has not been as helpful as it might in preparing lists of companies which will have to reduce dividends, companies which can pay more and companies which are unfairly hit and have a right of appeal to the Treasury for an adequate dividend basis. There is the special complication of companies which have paid dividends free of tax and will have to reduce them because income tax is now 7*s.* 6*d.* against a "high" of 5*s.* 6*d.* in the standard dividend period. (Example: 10 per cent. tax free at 5*s.* 6*d.* equals 13⅓ per cent. gross; 10 per cent. at 7*s.* 6*d.* equals 16 per cent. gross. Result—dividend must be cut by 2½ per cent. gross or 1.4 per cent. net.) Here are some important companies affected:—

	(1) Best Tax-free Div. %	(2) Gross Equiv. %	(3) Net Equiv. with Tax at 7/6	Price	Gross Yield on (3)
British American Tobacco £1 ...	21½	29½	18½	5⅛	£5 13 6
John Brown 10/- ...	17½	24½	15	30/3	£7 19 6
Guest Keen £1 ...	7½	10½	6½	22/9	£9 0 3
Imperial Tobacco £1 ...	25	34½	21½	5⅝	£6 2 9
Patons and Baldwins £1 ...	12½	17½	10¾	57/6	£6 0 0
Shell Transport £1	20	29½	18½	3½	£8 8 6
Staveley £1 ...	12½	16⅔	10¾	51/6	£6 9 3

It must not be assumed that all these companies will pay the maximum net dividend allowed. If tobacco consumption falls materially Imperial Tobacco may pay 20 per cent. or less, and whether or no Holland is invaded, I expect Shell Transport to pay not more than 15 per cent. net. In my opinion the Stock Exchange Committee should canvass every company paying dividends free of tax and request them to pay them gross. It would be less confusing for the shareholders, less exacting for the company and more decent for the nation. There should be a law against tax-free dividends.

* * *

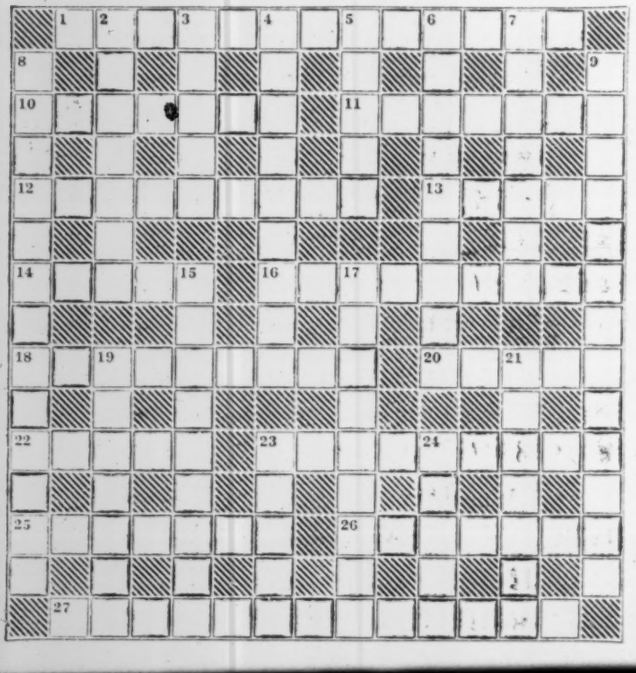
According to the "Actuaries Investment Index" industrial ordinary shares after their fall in April yield on the average 5.98 per cent., while preference shares, which remained virtually unchanged in price, yield 4.66 per cent. When the dividend uncertainties created by the Statute of Limitations have been resolved, I expect to see institutional investors buy the best of the new "fixed equities" until the yield obtainable from them approaches that of well-secured preference shares. The yield on ordinary shares is determined by two factors—the rate of interest and the risk premium, and the latter normally ranges from 1½ per cent. upwards, according to the type of risk involved. The Statute of Dividend Limitations has, I submit, changed the nature of the risk premium, which now depends upon the level of earnings to cover the fixed maximum distribution. In the war period, when the national income is rising, the earnings cover for the fixed equity dividends of companies in prosperous industries should be increased so that there is good reason for investors to buy the best "fixed" ordinary shares on a yield basis in competition with well-secured preference shares—and, indeed, in competition with gilt-edged stocks when the risk premium is much more than 1½ per cent. above the long-term rate of interest. It may be argued that this is a passing phase in the security markets which will not survive the war period, but who would dare to say that capital will ever be allowed to earn unlimited dividends when peace returns? Even stockbrokers are beginning to wonder whether the golden age for capital will ever return. I contend that reasonable rates of return on capital should be fixed according to the risks involved and the types of industry where the capital is employed. It is patently absurd for the Treasury to fix 4 per cent. as a maximum return on capital regardless of the risks to which it may be exposed. This is not Socialism; it is sheer nonsense. If the State is not prepared to take all the risks of trade it must allow private capital, in the role of *entrepreneur*, to earn a reasonable return commensurate with its risks and I suggest that these rates of return should be fixed, not by Treasury ignorami, but by a competent tribunal of business experts set up for determining Excess Profits Tax as well as maximum dividends.

* * *

It seems that the only group of industries which will be allowed to earn a reasonable return under the Statute of Dividend Limitations are those engaged in the production of commodities such as rubber and the base metals. The standard dividend period covers the commodity boom of 1937 when rubber rose to 1*s.* 1¾*d.* per lb., tin to over £300, copper to over £70 and lead and zinc to over £32 a ton. There are hard cases in these industries, where companies, such as London Tin, were in the reconstruction and development stage in the "Standard" period, but apart from these this group is in the matter of dividends "Budget-proof." The benefits of soaring commodity prices will not, however, be enjoyed by the Empire producers of copper, lead and zinc, seeing that they sold their output for the war to the Government at prices ruling at the beginning of the war. Tin and rubber producers were not so restricted. In the case of tin the dividends to be declared this year should approach those of 1937 when the tin quota averaged 107½ per cent. and the price of tin £242 a ton. In the twelve months to April 30th, 1940, the average quota worked out at 93⅓ per cent. and the average price £237 per ton. Yet tin shares have again fallen for no apparent reason other than market ignorance or weariness. My choice of tin shares at the moment is British Tin 10/- shares at 14/9 to yield over 8% on estimated dividends of 12%.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 531

Set by L.-S.



ACROSS

1. Nursery foot warmer.
10. He might have lost her.
11. You will find it green on the whole.
12. Suggests that a point has been made.
13. Returned great blows.
14. Sounds an owlish remark.
16. Not a stay-at-home crank.
18. Offensive, and possibly criminal, thing to have done.
20. Privately engaged in the Allies' fight.
22. Mechanical Oddfellow.
23. It would not seem possible to *give* such an entertainment.
25. It's true in a sort of way.
26. Gastronomic selections.
27. One often has them potted at table.

DOWN

2. Dutch metal.
3. Time of some of Schubert's works.
4. The call for the early mail coach?
5. Suggests a green old age.
6. Historical sticky-back?
7 (rev.). Legal description of Antonio.
8. Disrespectful description of Santa Claus?
9. Most common wartime export from the Reich.
15. The cry of the elephant.
17. Given as books often are.
19. His law I broke.
21. Literally at the beginning.
23. There's a mere change of ruler up here.
24. One of the places where people get their paddy up?

Last week's winner: James McClement, 90 Drumover Drive, Glasgow, E.1

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

NOTE:—Gone = "Gone with the Wind"

Company Meeting

LONDON ASIATIC RUBBER AND PRODUCE

MR. H. J. WELCH'S ADDRESS

THE Thirty-second Ordinary General Meeting of the company was held in London on Monday.

Mr. H. J. Welch (chairman) said (in part):

The heavily restricted crop amounted to 8,231,000 lbs.—that is, under 60 per cent. of our standard production. The sale price was the highest obtained since 1928 and was 2*d.* higher than in the previous year. The net increase in profit per pound was just under 1*d.* The planted acreage is higher by 910 acres, 890 by new plantings added to existing estates and 20 by an adjustment after survey. In addition 86 acres of old rubber were replanted. When I had the honour to join the Board in 1915 the planted acreage was 4,135 acres, but it now amounts to 30,310 acres. Of this 4,000 acres are budgrafted and over 50 per cent. is less than 15 years old.

After paying the dividend and making the other allocations proposed to-day, the issued capital will represent £30 13*s.* 7*d.* per planted acre and if you deduct from the capital the net surplus liquid assets amounting to £305,286 you get a net cost per planted acre of £20 12*s.* 2*d.* without taking into account the value of our 15,882 acres of reserve lands. The net cost per planted acre is the lowest on record for this company and compares with £41 in 1919. The valuable buildings, machinery and plant still stand in the balance sheet at £1.

From the net credit balance of £139,335 the company has paid an interim dividend of 4 per cent. It now proposes to pay a further 6 per cent., to make 10 per cent. for the year, and will carry forward £82,701. This year the heavy amount of £57,500 has had to be reserved to provide for income-tax payable in respect of profits made prior to the end of 1939. The total is £26,500 more than in 1939 and it includes over £4,000 insufficiently reserved last year owing to the rate having been increased subsequent to the issue of the accounts. Other allocations include £20,000 to general reserve, £1,500 (and a special grant of £778) to the employees' staff retirement fund and £200 to the subordinate staff reserve.

We have made forward sales for 1940 of about 2,000 tons at 10.85d. London equivalent and 9½d. net. We have also made a small forward sale for 1941 of 240 tons at about 10.05d. London equivalent or 8.70d. net.

The report and accounts were adopted.

Company Meeting

AULT & WIBORG LTD.

MR. GERALD WELLESLEY'S ADDRESS

THE Annual General Meeting of the Company was held in London on May 9th. Mr. Gerald Wellesley (the chairman), presiding, said (in part):—

The accounts would once again have provided you with record figures in respect of both turnover and profits had it not been for the war. Although our sales have decreased by only 3 per cent., our profits have fallen by 23 per cent.

After providing for Income Tax, National Defence Contribution, dividend on the 5½ per cent. Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares, transfer of £5,000 to Preference Share Capital Redemption Reserve Fund, transfer of £12,000 to Reserve Account, and a dividend of 6½ per cent. on the Ordinary Shares, there remains an undivided balance amounting to £11,000 3*s.* 7*d.*, of which £1,050 has under the Company's Articles to be placed to the credit of the Staff Participation Account. The directors recommend that a further dividend of 1 per cent. be paid on the Ordinary Shares, making a total dividend of 7½ per cent. for the year, and leaving to be carried forward £8,606 8*s.* 7*d.* as against £7,499 17*s.* 0*d.* a year ago.

During the 5½ years' life of your Company, its nett assets have increased from £350,000 to £499,944, an increase of about 42 per cent. In 1934 we had one factory alone. To-day the parent Company operates three factories, and in addition controls two subsidiary organisations, each of which operates its own works. With the exception of a 7½ per cent. increase in our Ordinary Capital, all these developments have been financed out of profits. I think you will agree that these facts indicate a sound and conservative policy on the part of your Board. Our two subsidiaries continue to give us every satisfaction. It is well to recognise that we are being confronted with serious difficulties which are likely to increase while the war lasts. Your Directors are making every endeavour to broaden the basis of business through the parent and subsidiary companies, which, in addition to printing inks and printing rollers of every description, are now manufacturing paints, lacquers, industrial finishes and textile colours.

The chairman closed by paying a tribute to the staff. The report was unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting

SPILLERS LIMITED

THE RT. HON. SIR MALCOLM A. ROBERTSON'S ADDRESS

THE Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm A. Robertson, chairman of Spillers Limited, presiding at the Annual General Meeting of the Company on Wednesday last, at the Hotel Victoria, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2, informed the stockholders that the directors were unable to present the accounts of the Company for the financial year ended on January 31st, 1940, owing to the imposition of a large measure of Government control on the business of the Company and its subsidiary undertakings.

WAR CONDITIONS

Immediately upon the outbreak of war Orders were issued by the Government that as from that date the import of all wheat and grain to the United Kingdom would be undertaken by the Government and that the manufacture of all flour other than that coming within certain special categories should conform to a common standard as laid down by the Government; and further that the selling prices of all flours and animal foods should be in accordance with those laid down by the Government from time to time.

The effecting of appropriate arrangements between the milling industry and the Government, whereby the position and earning power of the industry should be safeguarded, was a question of great anxiety to the directors. Negotiations were still proceeding and a special committee of the industry, on which the Company was represented, was prosecuting the matter with the utmost zeal.

FAVOURABLE RESULTS

The trading results of the Company from the commencement of the financial year to the outbreak of war were wholly satisfactory, but owing to the impossibility of preparing final figures in respect of the period between the outbreak of war and the close of the financial year, it would be necessary to adjourn the meeting *sine die* for the future reception of the accounts. The directors were, however, satisfied that the results for the year as a whole had been sufficiently favourable to enable them to recommend the payment of dividends in respect of the year ended January 31st, 1940, at the same rates as those for the previous year.

Sir Norman Vernon was now fully engaged at the Ministry of Food, where he was a member of the Cereals Control Board and vice-chairman of the Flour Mills Control Committee.

Mr. A. F. Forbes had been entrusted by the Air Ministry with the important and responsible post of Director of Capital Finance, but it had been possible to arrange for his part time and highly valuable services to be retained by the Company.

A high tribute should be paid to the staff of the Company and its subsidiaries for the manner in which they had performed their duties, now heavily increased as a result of the war and control conditions. Their task had been made heavier on account of depletions caused by the loss of 562 employees of the Parent Company, and its subsidiaries, who were now serving with H.M. Forces. It was often overlooked that those who remained engaged in an essential industry were performing services equally indispensable to the community. They could be assured that they were serving their country in the manner best adapted to their capacities.

The directors' Report was adopted.

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